The Socialist Movement in Reading, Pennsylvania

A Study in Social Change

Henry G. Stetler

THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT IN READING, PENNSYLVANIA

1896 - 1936

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By

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Storrs, Connecticut
1943

PREFACE

This study was conceived with the idea in mind that an intensive analysis, in microcosm, of an American Socialist group would shed some light upon the basic reasons for the success or failure of a political party committed to the realization of working class interests through the medium of the democratic process.

The use of the phraseology "Socialist Movement" is not meant to imply that the principles of the American Socialist party were effectuated in this community. It does mean, however, that a class-oriented movement emerged from a nucleus of Socialist trade-unionists, achieving sufficient strength to elect Socialist candidates to the State Legislature and to secure complete control of the municipal government on two occasions. Sufficient evidence points to the fact that many of its leaders and followers were convinced adherents to the principles of democratic socialism. That these principles were not realized is no reflection upon their good faith. Instead there is afforded an excellent example of the close-knit political-legal-economic-social ties of our complex American culture which serve to check any isolated, radical alterations in our fundamental socio-economic institutions.

Among the many persons who lent their assistance and encouragement to the making of this study, special acknowledgment should be made to Benjamin A. Fryer, Raymond Hofses, J. Henry Stump, Dr. John W. Innes, and Professor Robert S. Lynd.

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Storrs, Connecticut
July 27, 1943

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INTRODUCTION

For a number of years the city of Reading, Pennsylvania, enjoyed the distinction of being one of the three socialist cities in the United States. The fact that it had a vigorous Socialist party which had elected many public officials not only set it apart from other urban communities, but also raised the more crucial question of the significance of socialism in this Pennsylvania-German city. While the meaning and implication may be vague even to many who live within the community; to those who live elsewhere, Reading socialism may imply anything from a mere good government movement to an organized attempt by radicals to undermine the American system.

Was socialism in Reading a manifestation of the rise of the proletariat, or of the middle class, or of a group of classless social reformers? Did its leaders emanate from business, professional, labor, religious or intellectual sources? Was it merely a shift in political parties, or did it represent an orientation to a new set of basic principles? Did it represent temporary expediency in the face of some transitory issue or did its roots go deeper into the social and economic strata of the community? Was it a product of foreign-born agitators bringing an alien ideology to the community, or the acceptance of these principles by older American stock? Was it indicative of a feeling of class-consciousness on the part of its supporters? These and other questions may suggest themselves when one is confronted with the appearance of socialism in a contemporary American city.

In many ways the development of socialism in this community seems paradoxical. If we were not confronted with the fact, would we expect to find a movement of this sort appearing among the Pennsylvania-Dutch; or in an established American community with a relatively homogeneous population—not merely native American but of native American parentage; or in a community where three-fifths of the families own their own homes; or in a community relatively free from extreme poverty?

Near the turn of the century when socialist ideas led to the formation of a number of new political parties in America, small groups of trade unionists and reformers in this industrial city in the heart of

the Pennsylvania-Dutch country became converted to these ideas and molded a local Socialist party that grew even though the national organization remained a small minority party. This sustained development arouses our curiosity because of its continuation among a group of Americans of predominantly native origin who have been noted for their traditional conservatism. Although the city has been highly industrialized for three-fourths of a century, its population retained its indigenous character throughout the years of the most intensive European migration. This in itself is an unusual condition, since most other American cities of comparable size lost their indigenous characteristics as a result of the influx of the foreign born or the presence of a large proportion of first generation native born persons.

With the Reading socialist movement from 1896 to 1936 serving as our focus of interest, we shall attempt to answer two fundamental questions: First, what factors accounted for its development in a native-American environment? And, second, did it precipitate social thought and action along class lines? After placing the movement in its environmental setting, we shall describe its emergence as the product of a small group of reformers who built a party organization and secured adherents in ever-increasing numbers from outside the party. We shall then compare its achievements with its basic program or set of principles. Then we shall point out the class character of the party leaders and members and indicate the extent to which the impact of this group, with its socialist ideology, created or reinforced feelings of class consciousness among the various socio-economic groups within the city. Finally, we shall evaluate the relative importance of the causal factors which created this class-oriented movement.

Here in a provincial city we have the opportunity for observing the development of a "radical"[1] social movement in a decidedly

[1]The term "radical in this study is used in a relativistic sense, meaning that Reading Socialists professed a set of poiltical, economic, and social principles at variance with those commonly accepted by other groups, either in Reading or elsewhere in the United States; and that regardless of any threat of their actual or even potential realization, this set of principles was regarded and acted upon as radical by the Socialist opposition. A. B. Wolfe (*Radicalism, Conservatism, and Scientific Method,* Macmillan, New York, 1923, p. 17) writes, "There is . . . in every field of human sentiment, thought and action, a continuous gradation of attitude from reactionism to radicalism. The terms conservatism and radicalism, therefore, should always be regarded as relative, both to each other and to the standards of valuation or sentiment current at the time."

native American environment—a movement which achieved dominance though based on principles sharply divergent from both local and national tradition. We also can observe this movement serving as a stimulus and medium for the emergence within the working classes of a sensitivity to the factors which divided them from the rest of the community in contrast to the traditionally indoctrinated sensitivity to interests held in common with other socio-economic classes.[2] We are able to observe the means whereby a working class group supplemented their belief in organized economic action through the medium of trade unionism with political action through the medium of the Socialist party. Here we find a nucleus of skilled and semiskilled workmen, who had forged their own weapons of leadership, organization and education in the labor field, extending their activities to the political sphere with the aim of achieving for their own class a greater degree of control over their own economic destiny, and a more equitable share of goods. Throughout the years of socialist development in Reading, the leadership and organization both of trade unions and of the Socialist Party were identified closely with one another—in fact, represented complementary activities of the same group of persons. In this respect the local trade unionists departed from the policies of the American Federation of Labor, which had consistently refused to lend its support to one political party and had refrained from entering into the field of direct political activity through the creation of a separate labor party.[3]

The socialist movement in Reading progressed under the most diverse social and economic circumstances. In the period prior to World War I, after an initial decade of organized activity, the socialists succeeded in electing a representative to the Pennsylvania Legislature in 1910, and socialists were elected to several minor municipal offices in 1911. During World War I (prior to the entrance

[2]In an editorial during October, 1911, the *Reading Telegram* pointed to the threat of a Socialist victory on the ground that an elected Socialist would act in the interests of the party rather than the entire city, thus implying that elected candidates of other parties act in the interests of all groups.

[3]See Chapter 3.

of the United States into the conflict) socialists were again elected to the State Assembly in 1914 and 1916. During the years of "Coolidge prosperity" a socialist mayor and other socialist officials were elected to office. During the great depression socialists were elected to the State Assembly in 1930, 1932, and 1934; and in 1935 the Party again secured complete control of the city government. These achievements in the election of Socialist Party candidates who held various offices over a thirty-year period indicate in their continuity that this movement was not simply a "depression phenomenon," nor successful merely on the basis of transitory issues.[4]

The appearance of a political movement emphasizing class principles in this industrialized Pennsylvania city thus provides us with the unique opportunity for scientifically analyzing it under circumstances where factors which usually complicate a study of this type are held relatively constant.

[4]Hodges, Henry G., "Four Years of Socialism in Reading, Pennsylvania," *National Municipal Review*, May, 1931, p. 289. In this article, the author refers to the success of the party in 1927 and 1929 (when an assessment issue was in the forefront) as "a good short sale", apparently unaware of the strength of the Socialist Party as early as 1910, nor being able to foresee its return to power in the 1930's.

Chapter 1

A PENNSYLVANIA-GERMAN CITY

The city of Reading was laid out in 1748 by Thomas and Richard Penn, sons of William Penn. Located on the banks of the Schuylkill River about fifty-eight miles northwest of Philadelphia, and founded at a time when great numbers of German immigrants were flowing into Pennsylvania, it had from the beginning a predominantly Pennsylvania-German[1] population. For example, four years later, in 1752, when the county of Berks, with Reading as the county seat, was created by an act of the Assembly at Philadelphia, its population of 378 persons was served by three churches, Lutheran, German Reformed, and Friends.[2] Although there is no exact means of determining the ethnic composition of the town at this time, the fact that two of the three churches were of German origin clearly indicates the presence of a considerable number of immigrant Germans. A small number of Germans had settled in Germantown, Pennsylvania as early as 1683, through the encouragement of William Penn, but the heaviest migrations occurred in the first half of the eighteenth century. In 1747, a governor of the province estimated that the Germans comprised three-fifths of the entire population of the province, or about 120,000 people.[3] Most of these Germans settled on land within a radius of from twenty-five to one hundred miles from the center of Philadelphia. Even today, their descendants are concentrated in this Pennsylvania-German belt in which Reading and Berks County are located at the center. These immigrants were largely peasants and artisans who came to America to seek new opportunities in an environment free from Old World quarrels. A

[1]The terms "Pennsylvania-German" and "Pennsylvania-Dutch" are used interchangeably in this thesis with reference to persons descended from German immigrants to Pennsylvania in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. While these descendants refer to themselves, and are frequently described by others as Dutch, they are in fact of German origin.

[2]Montgomery, Morton L., *History of Reading, Pennsylvania, 1748-1898*, Reading, Pa., Times Book Print, 1898, pp. 10-12.

[3]Montgomery, Morton L., *Historical and Biographical Annals of Berks County, Pennsylvania*, J. H. Beers & Co., Chicago, 1909, Vol. I, pp. 16-20.

century of devastation wrought by successive military invasions of the Palatinate; economic burdens created by heavy taxation and loss of crops resulting from disastrous climatic conditions; and tensions created by quarrels over religious matters were the chief causes for their desire to migrate, and when aided and abetted by the advertising of colonial proprietors and ship owners and the active cooperation of the British government, large numbers of these discontented Germans eventually found their way to Pennsylvania.[4] The influence of these Germans who came to the county in its earliest years persisted and grew so that a local historian, writing in 1886, could say:

> "Over one hundred and thirty years have elapsed since the creation of the County, but the general features of the whole community bear their impression. Their manners and customs have been handed down from generation to generation, with little, if any, change; and their language is still in general use in every section."[5]

The existence of socialist governments in both Reading and Milwaukee during recent decades has led to the assumption that the common Germanic character of the population of both these cities in some way accounted for their acceptance of socialist candidates. It is frequently assumed that socialist ideas held by many Germans abroad during the nineteenth century were transplanted to these American cities by German migrants of the nineteenth century. While this may be true to a considerable extent of the development in Milwaukee, it is true to a very little, if any, extent in Reading. The ethnic composition of both these cities is predominantly of Germanic origin with this important difference—the Germans who came to Reading were chiefly immigrants of the first half of the eighteenth century; those who came to Milwaukee were chiefly immigrants of the latter half of the nineteenth century. This is evidenced by the fact that in 1900, only eleven percent of the persons in Reading were of German parentage, whereas more than fifty percent of the population of Milwaukee were of German parentage. The comparative weight of Reading's population of recent German descent in

[4]Knittle, Walter Allen, *The Early Eighteenth Century Palatine Immigration*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1936, p. 31.
[5]Montgomery, Morton L., *History of Berks County in Pennsylvania*, Everts, Peck & Richards, Philadelphia, 1886, p. 387.

1900 may be seen from the following percentages,[6] bearing in mind that these are an index only of first and second generation persons of German origin. If it were possible to measure, statistically, German descendants of 18th century origin, Reading's percentage would certainly equal or even be greater than that of the other cities. During the nineteenth century, more than five million Germans migrated to America—the largest number of any single nationality. Most of these came after 1848, settling throughout the United States and including large concentrations in cities such as New York,

	Percent Born in Germany	Percent with One or Both Parents Born in Germany
Reading	3.4	10.9
Bridgeport	4.0	9.6
Milwaukee	18.9	51.5

St. Louis, Milwaukee, and Cincinnati. New York City had the largest number, and Milwaukee had the largest percentage of nineteenth century German origin.[7] Although some of these later German immigrants came to Reading, their proportion was in most instances less than that of other cities.[8] In describing the character of the German immigration of the nineteenth century, Faust says that the first group (1820-1846) resembled more closely the sturdy German folk of the eighteenth century; the second (1846-1866) contained a larger number of refugees whose influence was strongly felt in the political and cultural development of the United States; while the third, coming after 1866, in culture and education more closely akin to the second group, contained a large number of men seeking, with advantage to themselves, the advancement of the commerce and manufactures of the American nation; a large number also being des-

[6]These percentages measure 19th, but not 18th century German migration. Allentown and Lancaster—other Pennsylvania-German cities adjacent to Reading—had 9.7 and 20.7 percent, respectively, of German parentage in 1900, though these cities also had many descendants of the 18th century German immigrants.
[7]Faust, Albert Bernhardt, *The German Element in the United States*, The Steuben Society of America, New York, 1927, Vol. I, Chap. 17, pp. 574-582.
[8]See table III. (Roman numeral tables are included in the Appendix; Arabic numeral tables in the body of the text.)

tined to become prominent in the technical and professional branches.[9] Faust's generalized description of the German immigrants of the latter part of the nineteenth century applies especially to some of the Germans who came to Berks County in that period and subsequently created some of the largest hosiery and textile machine industrial establishments in the United States.[10] The latter group in Berks County were probably as far removed from the older German stock in the acceptance of any socialist ideology as they were removed in Germanic origin. In fact, as we shall note in Chapter 4, the chief financial supporters of the anti-socialist group in Reading in recent decades have been industrialists of more recent German origin. It is significant that in Reading the leadership of the socialist group has been recruited from descendants of eighteenth century German immigrants, whereas considerable anti-socialist support has come from more recent German immigrants and their descendants.

INDUSTRIES

Reading is located at the hub of one of the thirty-three principal industrial areas of the United States.[11] In the city proper in 1929 there were over 300 manufacturing establishments representing over 100 different kinds of industry and producing goods valued at 121 million dollars. Textiles, of which hosiery was the principal type, constituted over one-fifth of the total value of manufactured products, accounted for one-fourth of all wages, and provided employment for 30 percent of all wage-earners.[12] Diversified metal industries, of which heavy types such as iron and steel and foundry products constituted a relatively small percentage, were next in importance but accounted for no more than 10 percent of the city's industrial output. Thus Reading is not a one-industry city, and in fact never has been since its founding in the middle of the eighteenth century. During the earliest years artisans skilled in various crafts settled in the

[9]Faust, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 590.
[10]e.g. Thun, Janssen, Oberlander, Nolde, Horst.
[11]15th U. S. Census (1930), *Abstract*, pp. 741, 763-764. The Reading Industrial Area (Berks County with a population of 231,717) ranked 30th in the number of wage-earners (47,350).
[12]See Table IV. In the Reading Industrial Area (both city and county) 36.7 percent of all wage-earners were employed in textile industries which produced 33 percent of the total value of products in 1929.

city and, according to a local historian, included occupations such as "baker, blacksmith, bookbinder, brick-maker, brewer, butcher, cabinet-maker, carpenter, clock-maker, cooper, cord-wainer, felt-maker, glazier, gun-smith, hatter, joiner, locksmith, nailer, potter, reed-maker, saddler, shoemaker, tanner, tinner, tobacconist, weaver, and wheelwright."[13]

At the close of the 18th century hat-making was the most important of these crafts. In Reading and Berks County this industry was greater, from the standpoint of units produced, than in any other county of the State; greater even than in Philadelphia.[14]

The foundation of the city's prominence as a metal and metal-products center in the latter part of the 19th century was laid in the discovery of iron ore in the county as early as the beginning of the 18th century. A local historian records the establishment of five furnaces and four forges between 1720 and 1760. By 1851, there were thirteen furnaces, twenty-three forges, and five rolling mills in the county—a number larger than that of any other county in Pennsylvania; in fact, a larger number than in any other single county within the United States. While the city retained its importance as an iron and steel center throughout the 19th century, a rapid decline in this industry set in early in the present century when the proximity of higher-grade iron ore deposits to soft coal deposits, precipitated a movement of this industry further west.[15]

Despite the prominence of iron production, the city's industries remained quite diversified throughout the 19th century, as evidenced by the situation in 1840 when there were over sixty-five different types of manufacturing establishments.[16] Also, after 1850 and particularly following the Civil War, there was an unusual increase in both the extent and diversity of industries. Montgomery emphasized the varied nature of this industrialization in 1898 by listing over 500 manufacturing plants, representing over 100 different types of industry.

[13]Montgomery, M. L. *History of Reading, Pennsylvania, 1748-1898,* Reading, 1898, p. 91.
[14]In 1795, 56,000 hats were produced by 38 hatters in Berks County, whereas 39,000 hats were produced by 68 hatters in Philadelphia. See Montgomery, M. L., *History of Berks County in Pennsylvania,* Everts, Peck, and Richards, Philadelphia, 1886, p. 707.
[15]*Ibid,* pp. 87-99.
[16]Montgomery, M. L., *History of Reading, Pennsylvania, 1748-1898,* pp. 93-94.

During the period from 1890 to 1930—coextensive with the development of the Reading socialist movement—there was a shift from iron, steel, and other metal industries to textiles. In 1900 the iron and steel industry ranked first, accounting for 26 percent of the total value of production, and if other metal products are included, 50 percent of the total value of production is accounted for.[17] Also, while in 1900 the tobacco industry accounted for merely 5 percent of the total value of industrial production, it is probably more closely related to the emergence of the socialist movement than any other single industrial factor because many of the early socialists were members of the cigar-makers union which subsequently furnished a considerable proportion of leaders in both the trades union and socialist groups within the city.

In 1929 textiles outranked all other industrial products, subordinating the metal industries to a minor role. The phenomenal growth of the hosiery industry—particularly the manufacture of full-fashioned silk hosiery—chiefly accounted for the emergence of Reading, as well as the entire industrial area (the county), as a textile center during this period. In 1900, hosiery and other knit goods accounted for less than 4 percent of the total value of products; in 1909, 8.9 percent; in 1919, 23.8 percent; and in 1929, 22.4 percent. The slight percentage decrease between 1919 and 1929 does not indicate a decline in the importance of this industry as much as it reflected a tendency of manufacturers to locate their mills in the suburbs or more remote parts of the county in order to be nearer to their labor supply. For example, in 1929, goods to the value of 229 million dollars were produced in the Reading industrial area (the entire county) of which 75 million dollars worth, or approximately one-third of the total, were textiles. This shift from metals and metal products to textiles, or from heavy metal industry to light non-metal industry, constituted the chief industrial change which occurred during the first three decades of the present century.

Whether this change had any particular bearing on the development of the socialist movement needs to be examined, though it

[17]See Table IV. Although metals and metal products had declined to a relatively unimportant position in the city by 1929, they still constituted 14 percent of total production in the entire industrial area. (15th U. S. Census (1930), *Manufactures,* Vol. III, pp. 457, 471.)

should be recognized that socialism was already well-established prior to the ascendancy of textiles to a position of industrial dominance. As early as 1910, the socialists elected a Representative to the State Assembly—at the time when the textile industry produced less than 10 percent of the total value of products, and employed less than 20 percent of all workers. From 1890 to 1910 active socialist leaders were recruited chiefly from the cigar-makers, iron-workers, and building trades unions, and even though the former two unions declined after 1910 because of mechanization in the cigar-making industry and the removal of most of the iron and steel industry, the socialist leadership remained largely in the hands of men who had been initiated into organized economic and political activities through the medium of these unions.

OCCUPATIONS

In 1930 over 56 percent of all gainfully occupied persons were employed in manufacturing pursuits. This percentage was higher than that of most American cities of over 100,000 population, with the exception of textile centers such as New Bedford and Fall River wherein approximately 62 percent were engaged in manufacturing industries.

If we examine more carefully the occupational distribution of Reading's population, we find, as in its industrial composition, that it has more in common with non-socialist cities such as Allentown or New Bedford than with socialist cities. This is revealed if we group the city's gainful workers into the social-economic categories used by Alba M. Edwards in his study prepared for the Bureau of the Census of the U. S. Department of Commerce.[18] In that study all persons who reported gainful occupations in the 1930 Census were grouped in six main categories as follows: (1) Professional persons, (2) Proprietors, Managers, and Officials (including farm owners, farm tenants, wholesale and retail dealers), (3) Clerks and kindred workers, (4) Skilled workers and foremen, (5) Semiskilled workers, and (6) Unskilled workers (including farm laborers and

[18]U. S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *A Social-Economic Grouping of the Gainful Workers of the United States,* 1930, by Alba M. Edwards, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1938.

servants). Since Edwards did not prepare a social-economic classification of workers in cities of less than 500,000 population, the groupings used for most of the cities in this study were prepared by classifying published Census data according to the Edwards formulation.[19] While the proportions of these social-economic groups in Reading are quite similar to those of Allentown—a neighboring industrialized, Pennsylvania-German city—they manifest certain striking differences when compared with Bridgeport and Milwaukee.[20] Only 16 percent of Reading's workers are in the skilled[21] category, and in this respect it is exceeded by the other socialist cities; whereas almost 35 percent are semiskilled,[22] a percentage markedly greater than either Bridgeport or Milwaukee. Even in the unskilled[23] group, Reading's proportion exceeds that of Bridgeport and Milwaukee. The large concentration of semiskilled workers in Reading may be accounted for to a considerable extent by their employment in the textile industries—a situation also characteristic of New Bedford where the textile industry is predominant. Also, many of these semiskilled workers are women, whose chief employment is in the hosiery mills.[24]

Between 1910 and 1930 the proportions of Reading's workers in the various social-economic groups underwent little change, though consistent with the expansion of the hosiery industry in this period, an increasing proportion of semi-skilled workers are found in the textile industries. Viewed in occupational perspective, Reading has a predominant "working class" character, because an unusually large proportion of its workers are employed in occupations requiring varying degrees of manual labor or dexterity, as distinct from occupations of a professional, proprietary, or clerical nature. In 1930, 72.7 percent of the city's gainful workers followed the former type

[19]See Tables V, VI, and VII.

[20]See Table V.

[21]Edwards (*op. cit.* p. 2) defines occupations as *skilled* "for the pursuance of which a long period of training or an apprenticeship is usually necessary, and which in their pursuance call for a degree of judgment and of manual dexterity, one or both, above that required in semiskilled occupations."

[22]Edwards (*ibid*) defines occupations as *semiskilled* "for the pursuance of which only a short period or no period of preliminary training is necessary, and which in their pursuance call for only a moderate degree of judgment or of manual dexterity."

[23]Edwards (*ibid*) defines occupations as *unskilled* "which usually require no special training, judgment, or manual dexterity, but supply mainly muscular strength for the performance of coarse, heavy work."

[24]See Table VI.

of occupation—a significantly greater proportion than that found in other socialist cities or in the neighboring Pennsylvania-German city of Allentown, though lesser than that of the New Bedford textile center (Table 1).

TABLE 1

GAINFUL WORKERS, BY BROAD SOCIAL-ECONOMIC GROUPS, 1930

	Professional, Proprietary, and Clerical. Percent	Skilled, Semiskilled and Unskilled. Percent
READING	27.2	72.7
Bridgeport	34.0	66.0
Milwaukee	37.3	62.7
Allentown	35.7	64.4
New Bedford	22.4	77.7

Note: See Tables V, VI, and VII for basic percents.

The city's occupational distribution does not seem to provide any immediate clue, *per se,* to the development of the socialist movement, largely because it occupies an intermediate position between cities with leading Socialist parties (Milwaukee and Bridgeport), and cities without powerful left-wing parties (such as New Bedford). It would be presumptuous to attribute the development of the Reading socialist movement to the presence of a population slightly over 70 percent working class when other socialist groups seem to flourish in cities with greater proportions of professional-proprietary-clerical persons. Also, socialist and other left-wing groups have secured relatively no foothold in cities with even lesser proportions of persons in the professional-proprietary-clerical categories. A more detailed analysis of any causal relationship between occupational composition and the development of the socialist movement is presented in chapters 4 and 6.

HOME OWNERSHIP

Since it might be assumed, on an *a priori* basis, that a socialist movement would find its greatest potentialities for development not merely among an industrial proletariat but among a *propertyless* urban proletariat, we now consider Reading and other socialist and non-socialist cities with respect to home ownership.

In 1930, approximately 60 percent of Reading's families owned their homes. This unusually high percentage was equalled by only three United States cities having more than 100,000 population.[25] It was greater than that of the urban United States; greater than the other socialist cities; greater than other Pennsylvania-German cities; greater than other textile cities; greater than cities equal in size to Reading; greater than "Middletown"—in fact, greater than that of any city selected for comparative analysis in this study.[26] Since it might reasonably be contended that the percentage of homes owned would be less in cities larger than Reading because many families lived in apartments or tenements where ownership was precluded, a comparison with the 283 cities having 25,000 to 100,000 population reveals that only 22 cities, or 8.5 percent, had a higher proportion than that of Reading.[27]

Furthermore, in 1920 very nearly half of Reading's owned homes were free of any mortgage.[28] While the trend from 1890 to 1920 was in the direction of a larger percentage of mortgaged homes, this trend was no more pronounced in Reading than in other cities selected here for comparison. For example, between 1890 and 1920, homes owned free of any encumbrance declined from 55 to 47 percent in Reading; from 50 to 22 percent in Bridgeport; from 54 to 41 percent in Milwaukee; from 63 to 49 percent in Allentown; and from 60 to 54 per cent in Lancaster. Even in Philadelphia, a neighboring metropolis frequently described as a "city of homes," this percentage declined from 61 to 30 between 1890 and 1920.

With respect to rented homes, Reading compares quite favorably when fifth percentile rental values—indicative of the extent of extreme poverty[29]—are considered. This value in 1930 was $15.42 for Reading—exceeded only slightly by a few of the cities selected for comparison in this study.[30]

[25]Flint, Mich., 59.8 percent; Tacoma, Wash., 60.5 percent; and Grand Rapids, Mich., 59.6 percent.

[26]See Table VIII.

[27]15th U. S. Census (1930), *Abstract*, pp. 452-456.

[28]See Table IX. Data on "mortgage-free" home ownership were not published after 1920 by the Census Bureau.

[29]This measure of "exteme poverty" is used by E. L. Thorndike in *Your City*, Harcourt, Brace, 1939. He describes the fifth percentile rental family as "a family paying more rent than the lowest 4½ per cent and less than the highest 94½ per cent." (p. 111).

[30]See Table VIII.

This apparently paradoxical phenomenon of the emergence of a socialist movement in a community characterized by a high degree of mortgage-free home ownership coupled with the relative absence of extreme poverty, as indicated by fifth percentile rental values, will be analyzed in chapter 6.

STABILITY OF THE POPULATION

Although Reading virtually doubled in population from 1890 to 1930, receding slightly between 1930 and 1940 in common with the national trend toward a lesser rate of urban growth in that decade, the greater part of the increase occurred between 1890 and 1910—the formative years of the socialist movement.[31] From 1910 to 1930 the retarded rate of growth of the city proper was compensated for by an unusually large population increment in those portions of the metropolitan district lying beyond the city limits. During the 1920's the population of the city increased only 3.1 percent while that of the metropolitan district outside the city limits showed an increase of 61.6 percent. Although the suburbs have a substantial proportion of working class families living near the hosiery mills scattered throughout the metropolitan district a high proportion of upper middle and upper class families is concentrated in certain of these suburbs. For example, in Wyomissing—a suburban community dominated by the Thun and Janssen textile machinery and hosiery interests—the median home value is almost double and the median rental value is a third larger than that of the city.[32] The net effect of no land annexation to the city, coupled with an increasing concentration of wealthier families in the suburbs during the 1920's, was to increase the proportion of working class families within the city proper.

An examination of the nativity composition of the city from 1890 to 1940 reveals that a small proportion of the total population increase during the period was born abroad. Foreign-born whites constituted never less than seven nor more than nine percent during these years.[33] Furthermore, 94 percent of the native population were

[31]Reading had a population of 58,000 in 1890, 79,000 in 1900, 96,000 in 1910, 108,000 in 1920, 111,000 in 1930, and 110,500 in 1940.

[32]See Table X.

[33]In 1890, 8 percent of the city's population was foreign-born; in 1930, 8.6 percent, with little variation in the intervening years.

born within Pennsylvania—a proportion born within the State of residence not exceeded by any other American city of more than 100,000 persons. And, if all persons born within Pennsylvania are expressed as a percentage of the *total* population of the city, we find that 86 percent were born therein—a percentage markedly larger than that of other comparable industrial cities.[34] Although unfortunately no census data are available on *intra-state* place of birth, it is reasonable to infer on the basis of church affiliation and other cultural qualities of the citys' population that the greater proportion of the population increase from 1890 to 1930 came from two sources —natural increase within the city proper and migration from Berks and adjacent counties. Thus, while the city grew considerably during this period, its growth did not result from an ecological invasion by cultural aliens. For our later analysis it is important to recognize at this point that the radical changes in political and economic points of view during this forty-year period had a foundation of population stability as well as ethnic homogeneity.

ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS HOMOGENEITY

The city of Reading, located in a county with a population so predominantly of eighteenth century origin, occupies in this century a unique position among industrial centers of its size and type in that it lacks their usual degree of ethnic and religious heterogeneity. As late as 1920, its population of nearly 108,000 had the largest proportion of native white persons (90.3 percent), and of native whites of native parentage (75.2 percent) of *all* cities of more than 100,000 persons in the United States.[35] This picture changed very little during the following decade because in 1930, approximately nine-tenths of its more than 111,000 persons were native white—exceeded by only four cities in the middle-west[36]—and more than seven-tenths were native white of native parentage—exceeded by only nine other cities of more than 100,000, mostly located in the middle-west.[37]

[34]See Table II.
[35]14th U. S. Census, *Abstract*, 1920.
[36]15th U. S. Census, *Abstract*, 1930, pp. 101-102. Evansville and Fort Wayne, Ind., Peoria, Ill., and Wichita, Kan.
[37]*Ibid.*

The ethnic homogeneity of the city is even more significantly emphasized when it is compared with cities in the population class immediately beneath it—those having from twenty-five to 100 thousand persons. Of the 283 cities in this latter category, 81 per cent had a native white population smaller than that of Reading.[38] Or, if we group together all the 376 cities having twenty-five thousand or more population, 84.3 percent had a smaller native white population than Reading.[39] The high degree of ethnic homogeneity is especially apparent, with reference to this study, when the nativity of Reading's population is compared with selected groups of American cities having some characteristic in common with Reading.[40] For example, other socialist cities—Bridgeport and Milwaukee; other textile cities—New Bedford, Fall River, Lowell, and Paterson; and other cities equal in size—Erie, Elizabeth, Wilmington, Canton, and Utica, all have smaller proportions of native white persons of native parentage. Although two of the three other Pennsylvania-German cities—Lancaster and Lebanon—selected for comparison in this study, as well as "Middletown,"[41] have higher proportions, the differences do not seem unusually great when Reading's size and industrial development are taken into account.

It is also significant that 94 percent of the city's native population were born in Pennsylvania. This high percentage of native persons born within the State in which they reside is not exceeded by any other American city having over 100,000 population, and is considerably higher than the 72 percent characteristic of the entire urban United States.[42] According to the U. S. Census classification, a white population recruited from diverse foreign origins would have its first generation born in this country defined as native and its second generation defined as native white of native parentage. Thus, native birth within the State is not, as such, indicative of ethnic homogeneity, though there is sufficient converging evidence from religious and linguistic sources to warrant the inference that

[38]*Ibid.*, pp. 108-112.
[39]*Ibid.*, pp. 15-16.
[40]See Table I. (Also, see Appendix 1 for exposition of bases on which cities were selected (Groups A-E) for statistical comparisons.
[41]Selected by the Lynds for study as a typical American community.
[42]See Table II.

with respect to Reading's population, native birth within the State is indicative of a high degree of ethnic homogeneity.

In 1751, three years after Reading was laid out by Thomas and Richard Penn, three churches were established,[43] of which the Lutheran and Reformed were of Germanic origin, and the third—the Friends—was of English origin. While other Protestant and non-Protestant denominations were established during succeeding decades, the Protestant churches—especially those of Germanic origin—retained their dominant position in the religious life of the city to the present day. Between 1926 and 1936 over half of the city's population was affiliated with various denominations; and of these church members, 66 percent were Protestant, 30 percent Roman Catholic, and 4 percent Jewish.[44] The Protestant members consisted chiefly of persons affiliated with denominations of either German or Pennsylvania-German origin, including the Lutheran, Reformed Church in the United States, Brethren, Evangelical, Evangelical Congregational, Mennonite, Moravian, United Brethren in Christ, and others. A comparison of the church affiliations in five of the leading Pennsylvania-German counties and cities with those of Pennsylvania as a whole reveals the predominance of denominations of Germanic origin in the organized religious life of that portion of the State.[45] Thus, socialism reached the height of its power in Reading at the time when 53 percent of the city's church members were affiliated with Protestant denominations of Germanic origin, compared with 25 percent in Milwaukee and 4 percent in Bridgeport—other leading socialist cities. It is not assumed that such affiliation in 1926—especially in the Pennsylvania counties which received the bulk of their Germanic migration in the 18th century—marks a clear line of demarcation between Germanic and non-Germanic ethnic origin, though it seems to provide as useful an

[43]Montgomery, Morton L., *History of Reading, Pennsylvania, 1748-1898,* Reading, 1898, pp. 53-54.

[44]U. S. Census of Religious Bodies, 1926 and 1936.

[45]*Ibid,* 1926, Vol. I, Tables 31 and 32. The percentage of total church members in Protestant churches of German or Pennsylvania-German origin was 69 in Berks county, 74 in York county, 64 in Lehigh county, 58 in Lancaster county, and 71 in Lebanon county. Comparable percentages in the leading cities of these counties were consistently smaller, though never less than 50 percent. For example, 53 percent of Reading's church members were affiliated with Protestant denominations of German or Pennsylvania-German origin.

approximation to such origin as is available for comparative purposes. And in addition it should be recognized that in all of these cities, some proportion of Roman Catholics and Jews are of Germanic origin. For example, in Reading, one of the Roman Catholic churches includes a proportion of Catholics of Germanic origin in its membership.[46]

Reading's predominance as a Protestant city is striking when compared with other industrial centers. Apart from other Pennsylvania-German cities in adjacent counties, it differs markedly from the other socialist cities, and other textile centers. Milwaukee's church population is 53 percent and Bridgeport 62 percent Roman Catholic. The church membership of New Bedford, Fall River, and Lowell ranges from 72 to 78 percent Roman Catholic. The significance of these comparisons lies in the fact that socialism in any of these cities does not seem on the surface to be correlated with church affiliation.

The German ethnic origin of the community is also reflected in a dialect compounded of German and English words and known as "Pennsylvania-Dutch" which is spoken by many persons even today, especially in the rural portions of the county.[47] While English is

[46]Caution is necessary in the interpretation of the relative strength of church affiliations based on a direct comparison of *total* membership in each denomination. Certain churches, among which are the Lutheran and Roman Catholic, include persons under 13 in their membership—a practice not followed by the German Reformed and many other Protestant groups. Thus in Reading in 1926, the Roman Catholic Church reported a membership of 17,818, of which 31.8 percent were under 13, whereas the German Reformed Church reported a membership of 11,410, of which none was under 13. In a church such as the German Reformed, many younger members of families would be reported as Sunday School scholars—8,793 in 1926—whereas the Roman Catholic Church reported only 859 persons in this category in that year. A further caution must also be observed even when comparing membership 13 and over because the reported membership of the Roman Catholic Church probably approximates very closely the total number of persons professing that faith within the community, whereas reported membership in many Protestant groups may exclude a considerable number in the non-church member group who possess Protestant religious convictions but who carry their individualism in religious matters to the point of not formally affiliating with an organized group. Since anywhere from 40 to 50 percent of the population are not reported as church members, it seems reasonable to assume that a large proportion have Protestant leanings without formal church affiliation. (See U. S. Census of *Religious Bodies,* 1926, pp. 16-17, for a discussion of why a comparison of members of all ages may over-emphasize the strength of certain denominations.)

[47]In 1940, the Census Bureau reported the German Mother Tongue of the population, not only for the foreign-born (as in 1930) or for the foreign white

the common medium of communication, this dialect has left its stamp upon the accent and expression of many persons to such an extent that it readily identifies a resident of this portion of the State. In the 18th and 19th centuries this dialect was used exclusively by many Pennsylvania-Germans, and many churches conducted services in German. Quite a few newspapers were printed in German, and as late as 1900, six of the 27 daily, weekly, and monthly newspapers[48] published at Reading were printed in the German language

From a racial standpoint, the city has always been predominantly white, the Negro group constituting at all times less than two percent of the population.

A "CONSERVATIVE" TRADITION

Pennsylvania-Germans have been described as a very conservative people. There is scarcely a book written about them which does not contain either an explicit statement to that effect or attempt to convey it by implication through a recital of the distinctive old world customs and traditions which they have retained across the centuries since their first settlement in America. Whether these authors are local historians or persons of Pennsylvania-German descent with a bias in favor of their subject, or whether they are outsiders who regard the Pennsylvania-Germans as "quaint" and emphasize their eccentricities and lack of complete assimilation, they usually make some reference to the conservatism of the Pennsylvania-German element.

Fisher, writing in 1896—the period coinciding with the formation of the socialist group in Reading—said that "in the towns of Lancas-

stock (as in 1920), but also for native whites of native parentage. Defining *Mother Tongue* as the "principal foreign language, if any, spoken in the home of the person in his earliest childhood," it is significant that Pennsylvania had the largest percentage of native whites of native parentage (34.5) reporting German as the Mother Tongue. The Census Bureau accounts for this high percentage on the ground that "undoubtedly these are mainly the so-called 'Pennsylvania-Dutch'" (actually of German or Swiss descent), who have been in America for six or seven generations. Although these data are not available, specifically, for the Pennsylvania German communities of the State, their applicability may be inferred from the fact that of the 407,120 persons in Pennsylvania reporting German as the Mother Tongue, only 25 percent lived in Philadelphia or Pittsburgh (See 1940 Census Release).

[48]Montgomery, M. L., *op. cit.*, p. 59.

ter, Lebanon, York, Reading, Allentown, Easton, and Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Dutch is constantly heard, and in some of these towns there are comparatively few people who speak English exclusively"; "their maxims and traditions are most conservative, and of high rank among them is that one which instructs a son not to attempt to improve on the ways of his father"; "in the counties where the Germans have always lived in masses there is comparatively little change; and judging by the trifle that has been accomplished in a hundred and fifty years, complete absorption and a homogeneous population[49] are still five hundred, if not a thousand, years away"; and "they are generally a most thrifty, conservative people."[50]

Weygandt, in 1929, wrote that

> "It is a worn witticism in Pennsylvania that we still vote for Andrew Jackson in Berks.[51] This saying, interpreted with sympathy for us, means that things change so slowly in the heart of the Red Hills that people are doing there what they did in the days before the Mexican War. Interpreted without sympathy for us, it means that the 'dumb Dutch' do not know that the world moves. A libel, some of us declare the last interpretation, a half libel others. There are those among us who will admit that it has in it a modicum of truth, if it is taken, of course, figuratively. In any event it serves to point out that we Pennsylvania Dutch are the most conservative people in America."[52]

A former local educator, in 1938, wrote that

> "Over ninety percent[53] of Reading's population during the period under study (1900-1935) were German or Pennsylvania German; a very conservative, self-sufficient, sturdy stock that vigorously resisted any kind of change. These persons were satisfied to do in the same old ways all the activities that comprised their lives, and they fought earnestly every suggestion that things might be done differently, often standing squarely in the way

[49]The reference is to the entire State of Pennsylvania.

[50]Fisher, S. G., *The Making of Pennsylvania* (1932 edition), Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1896, pp. 118-133.

[51]The county in which Reading is located.

[52]Weygandt, C., *The Red Hills,* University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1929, p. 5.

[53]An overestimate, since during the years 1900-1935 only 70-80 per cent of the population were native white of native parentage, and not all of these were of Germanic origin.

of social progress even when they had no consistent arguments to oppose change."[54]

In the counties where persons of Pennsylvania-German descent are in the majority, the basic elements of a distinct German peasant culture have been retained over a period of some two hundred years. Marriage customs, religious practices, supernatural beliefs, foods and methods of food preparation, antagonism toward formal education and an exclusive dialect combining elements of the German and English languages are found.[55] The combination of these elements gives the inhabitants of the "Pennsylvania-Dutch" country a position somewhat analogous to that of other relatively distinct cultural groups such as are found in certain parts of New England, the Southern United States, and French Quebec. In fact, among the ethnic groups which migrated to North America in the 17th and 18th centuries, the Pennsylvania Dutchman ranks with the French Canadian in the degree of cultural autonomy maintained throughout the centuries in the midst of a North American culture of predominant English origin.

The traditional culture of the Pennsylvania-German is found in its purest form in the more rural communities, inhabited by farmers and adherents to the sectarian religious groups. Though unmistakably present, this culture assumes a more diluted form in the cities where the degree of the individual's emancipation is conditioned by many factors such as education, occupation, and contact with other cultural groups. However, despite the fact that we find considerable diversification of this sort within Reading, the community as a whole is stamped with certain characteristics which identify it as predominantly Pennsylvania-German, setting it apart from non-Pennsylvania-German communities. We shall examine the attitude of the Pennsylvania-German toward formal education as illustrative of the persistence of at least one typically "conservative" trait.

An Act establishing free schools was approved by the Pennsylvania State Legislature on April 1, 1834.[56] Wickersham points out that this law met with most favor in the northern counties which had been settled principally by people from New England and New York who had been accustomed to public schools and understood their advantages; was comparatively well received in the counties west of the Alleghenies; but met with the most formidable opposition "in the southern, central, and southeastern portions of the State, and *greatest of all in counties and districts in which the people were principally of German descent*" (italics ours).[57] Although the bill had been passed almost unanimously by both Houses, the apparent unanimity of opinion expressed by the legislators was not shared by the masses of people. Several religious denominations, including the Friends, the Lutherans, the Reformed (German), and the Mennonites, vigorously opposed the Act. This was not because they were opposed to education, since they had established hundreds of schools in connection with their churches, but rather because of their belief that secular education should be closely tied up with religious instruction. Many people of German descent were opposed because they felt that the German language would be replaced with English. Some argued that the education of the masses was dangerous; others opposed it as an undue interference with their parental rights; still others rejected it on the ground of opposition to[58] all change. Many legislators elected in the following year went to Harrisburg to undo the legislation. In Berks County, two old members of the Legislature who had voted for free schools and were candidates for re-election were badly beaten. The legislative session of 1834-35 was flooded with petitions asking for repeal or modification of the law. The greatest number of these petitions originated in the Pennsylvania German counties, led by Berks in which 3,674 persons signed 63 petitions seeking repeal. And when a vote was taken in the various school districts of the State to accept or reject the law, 30 out of 34 districts in Berks county rejected it at that

[54]Lozo, J. P., *School and Society in the City of Reading,* Univ. of Penn. Press, Philadelphia, 1938, p. 262.

[55]For detailed accounts of the Pennsylvania-Germans and their culture, consult Faust, A. B., *The German Element in the United States,* The Steuben Society of America, N. Y., 1927; the *Proceedings* of the Pennsylvania-German Society; and other relevant works listed in our bibliography.

[56]Commonwealth of Penna., Dept. of Public Instruction, *100 Years of Free Public Schools in Pennsylvania, 1834-1934,* Harrisburg, 1934, p. 3.

[57]Wickersham, J. P., *A History of Education in Pennsylvania,* Lancaster, Penna., 1886, pp. 318-319.

[58]*Ibid.,* pp. 319-320; Commonwealth of Penna., Dept. of Public Instruction, *op. cit.,* p. 17; Montgomery, M. L., *History of Berks County in Pennsylvania,* Philadelphia, 1886, pp. 377-378.

time, and as late as 1845, 26 of the districts still rejected it.[59] In fact, for years thereafter some sections of the county maintained their opposition, and it was not until 1867 that the last district capitulated.[60] It should be noted, however, that while the masses were opposed to free schools, some of the earliest advocates were Pennsylvania-Germans. According to Baer,[61] the first Governor who took a stand in favor in 1827 was John Andrew Shultze, a native of Berks County. And it was under Governor George Wolf, also a Pennsylvania-German, though not a native of Berks County, that the free public school system was established.

This opposition to formal education persisted as late as 1930, as reflected by the relatively low proportion of persons attending school in the Pennsylvania-German counties of the State. Out of a total of 67 counties in Pennsylvania, the five leading Pennsylvania-German counties[62] rank among the lowest ten, and Berks County—in which Reading is located—ranks *lowest* among the Pennsylvania-German group in the proportion of persons aged 7 to 20 years attending school.[63]

The question now might be asked, "Does this situation among the Pennsylvania-Germans also generally characterize them when living in an urban environment, such as Reading?" The data provide a decisive answer in the affirmative, indicating that opposition to formal education is retained in a predominantly Pennsylvania-German community under conditions of urban and industrial life. Not only does the proportion of school attendance in the city differ very little from that of the county, but it is *lower in all age categories* than that of other Pennsylvania-German cities and *lower* than that of any city selected for comparison in this study.[64] Examining *all* ninety-three cities of over 100,000 in the United States, we find that only two[65] had a lesser percentage than Reading of persons aged

[59]Wickersham, *op. cit.*, pp. 322-323, 330-331, 370.
[60]Baer, S. A., *Educational History of Berks County,* Reading, 1877, p. 14.
[61]*Ibid.*, p. 13.
[62]Berks, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, and York Counties.
[63]Specifically, in the 14-15 age group, Berks County ranked 66th among 67 counties; in the 16-17 age group it ranked lowest; in the 18-20 age group it ranked 66th. See 15th U. S. Census, 1930, *Population,* Vol. III, Pt. 2, tables 6, 13.
[64]See Table XI.
[65]St. Louis, Mo. (66.2 percent), and San Antonio, Texas (65.7 percent).

7 to 20 years attending school. If we break down this group into its component age categories, we find that Reading had 95.5 percent, aged 7 to 13, attending school. Only eight[66] other cities—all located in the South—had a lesser percentage. In the 14-15 year group, 86.5 percent were attending school in Reading, whereas only seven other cities[67]—five in the South and two in New England—had a lesser percentage. Of those 16-17 years of age, 35.7 per cent were attending school in Reading—the *lowest* percentage for *all* cities in the United States of over 100,000 population. The percentages in this category range from 8.9 in Long Beach, California, to 35.7 in Reading. In the 18-20 year group, Reading had only 11 percent attending school—likewise the *lowest* percentage for all cities of over 100,000; percentages which range from 37.9 in Seattle to 11 in Reading.[68] It is even more amazing to find that in each of these component age categories, the percentages of school attendance in Reading are *lower* than those of the native white of native parentage, native white of foreign or mixed parentage, foreign-born white, and the Negro groups in the entire urban population of the United States.[69]

The absence of a comparatively large proportion of young persons from formal educational institutions does not imply that they remain idle, but rather that they enter gainful occupations at relatively early ages. This is indicated in the comparisons between Reading and the other socialist and textile cities in the percentages of children, aged 10 to 15 years of age gainfully occupied, shown on the next page.

And if all cities of over 100,000 population in 1930 are considered, Reading's rate for females was the highest, and in the male group was exceeded only by Atlanta where 8.5 percent were gainfully occupied.[70] Furthermore, in 1930, Reading had 57 percent of its males of age 16 gainfully occupied and 53 percent of its

The former has a considerable Negro population (11.4 percent), and the latter has more than 40 percent Negroes and Mexicans. See 15th U. S. Census (1930), *Abstract,* pp. 102, 270-271.
[66]Atlanta, Chattanooga, Dallas, El Paso, Houston, Nashville, Norfolk, and San Antonio. See 15th U. S. Census, *ibid.*
[67]Baltimore, St. Louis, Atlanta, New Orleans, San Antonio, Fall River, and New Haven. See 15th U. S. Census, *ibid.*
[68]See 15th U. S. Census, *ibid.*
[69]See Table XI.
[70]15th U. S. Census, 1930, *Abstract,* pp. 376-377.

females of that age. With the exception of Fall River, this is well beyond all the other cities considered in this study. The corresponding figures for Milwaukee are actually only 18 percent of the males at age 16 and only 14 percent of the females of that age.[71]

	1920		1930	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
United States (non-agricultural)	4.1	2.6	1.6	1.1
Reading	13.4	12.6	6.6	8.0
Bridgeport	8.4	7.9	3.0	3.3
Milwaukee	11.5	8.4	1.5	.3
New Bedford	18.6	15.7	4.7	4.9
Fall River	19.4	17.7	5.8	6.9
Lowell	10.2	7.6	1.4	1.7
Paterson	11.7	11.7	3.2	3.5

These relatively high rates of gainful occupation among young persons may be partially accounted for by their ability to secure employment in the textile industries, where large numbers of semi-skilled workers were in demand. But even that does not provide a satisfactory explanation as to why such large proportions chose to work instead of continuing their schooling for a length of time comparable with that found in other American cities. Reading has an adequate school system which compares favorably with other American communities. Its young people who continue with high school or college education are able to compete successfully in various occupations and professions with persons from other communities. What needs emphasis, however, is that the proportion of young persons, especially between the ages of 14 and 20, who acquire various degrees of formal education, is unusually low in Reading. Comparisons with other cities and other ethnic groups thus have served to highlight another unique situation; that Reading is an urban community which combines a high proportion of native whites of native parentage with proportions of school attendance decidedly lower than those of other American cities wherein the stock is of more recent and diverse foreign origin.

[71] *Ibid, Population,* Vol. V, pp. 240, 243.

In consequence, we find another paradoxical situation which seems extremely puzzling if an explanation is sought in terms of an analysis of immediate, objective factors. Only by considering, in addition, the culuture trait of opposition to formal education on the part of the masses of Pennsylvania-Germans—of which a wealth of historical evidence is available—do we find a clue. Economic or occupational factors which quite plausibly might be assumed to be of first importance are obviously not sufficient. Instead, we must look to a group trait of long standing. An excellent example of the conservation of this trait is succinctly expressed in a case cited by a former local educator:[72]

> "In 1929 when the writer first came to Reading as principal of its high school, a girl who had just reached the legal age of employment came in to tell him she had to leave school. In answer to his questions, she stated that she liked school, that her father had a good position as foreman in a hardware factory, that they owned their own home, that an older sister was working and contributing her pay to the family, and that her father did not need the money of the girl who was leaving school but he just wanted it. When he suggested that he talk with her father to attempt to persuade him to let the girl remain in school, she begged him not to, for fear of a beating. Subsequent investigation confirmed the girl's story. *Incidents like this were common during his principalship.*"

The position of the Pennsylvania-German on the subject of formal education as evidenced by early opposition to the Common School Law and reflected in recent times in school attendance and occupational statistics is evidence, at least in this phase of their culture, of the persistence of a traditional mode of conduct—found not only in the rural portions of the Pennsylvania-German counties, but also apparent under urban conditions of life. If this opposition were found more or less exclusively in the rural areas

[72] Lozo, *op. cit.,* p. 87. We concede that the father's "just wanting" his daughter's wages might be interpreted as indicative of an economic casual factor. However, we are inclined to infer that this was merely incidental in the light of the total situation. The father obviously did not need the money and probably wanted his daughter to leave school chiefly because of his acceptance of the traditional Pennsylvania-German attitude toward work as preferable to too much formal education. We have indicated elsewhere that this attitude is not typical of all contemporary Pennsylvania-Germans, but it nevertheless persists among a goodly number even in the absence of any imperative economic need.

—as evidenced in a recent case of conflict between the Old Order Amish sect of Lancaster County[73] and the Federal Government over the replacement of one-room schools with a consolidated school erected with WPA funds—it might be quite intelligible in terms of the relative cultural isolation of the group. But when this trait persists in an urban community, where the mode of life has undergone modification through the impact of new industrial, occupational, and economic elements, it confirms the necessity of including non-material factors, along with material factors, in any casual explanation of resistance to, or acceptance of, social change.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter has been to provide a concise picture of the environmental setting out of which the Reading Socialist movement emerged. From a wealth of historical and contemporary data, we have presented Reading as a highly industrialized and occupationally diversified American city, with a relatively homogeneous population located at the center of one of the leading Pennsylvania-German counties in the Pennsylvania-German section of the State; a city of homeowners; a city wherein the dominant ethnic stock has been noted for generations for its conservatism; but nevertheless, a city where the American Socialist party flourished during the first third of this century, and one of three American cities where the Socialist party dominated political life for a considerable number of years. We now turn to a consideration of the origin and expansion of the Socialist movement in this community.

[73]See the excellent study of this conservative Pennsylvania-German sect by W. A. Kollmorgen *The Old Order Amish of Lancaster County, Penna.* Rural Life Studies, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, 1942. Kollmorgen includes a wealtlh of evidence on the opposition to formal education among a group of contemporary, culturally isolated, rural Pennsylvania-Germans. This opposition is a part of their general aversion to any improvement upon the ways of their ancestors. While Kollmorgen deals with a Pennsylvania-German sect that today is not typical of all Pennsylvania-Germans, his study nevertheless serves to point up certain Pennsylvania-German cultural traits which continue to persist in diverse, diluted forms among these groups even when transplanted to an urban, industrial environment.

Chapter 2

ORIGIN AND EXPANSION OF THE MOVEMENT

To the staid business-men of Reading in the 1880's, the political problem was "to get better men in politics". A local historian and lawyer made the following observations:

> "I shall have much to say of our untiring and successful industry, of our practical, pure and simple religion, and of our general education, from which we have realized such fruitful local results. *But of our politics I can have comparatively little to say, because we have obtained so little worthy of special mention.* We have produced only a few men who have been leaders of prominence. . . . We have developed little or no legislation for our own good or the good of our fellow citizens here or elsewhere. We have not taken a leading part in agitating public measures. Our local pride should be awakened to a sense of our importance as a people possessing numbers, wealth and power. This should induce us to take a stand proportioned to our condition; this should inspire us to raise up more sons and educate them to a proper appreciation of political duty, political knowledge, and political progress. We cannot elevate our political sentiments by encouraging inexperienced and incompetent men to represent us in local or in legislative offices or even to lead us in manipulating conventions and elections. *The time has arrived for the better class of men possessed of education, experience, influence and wealth, to step forward and show a positive interest in the selection of officials.* Through them must we direct our energy in the political channel, as it has been successfully directed in the industrial, and through them only can we expect to produce representative men who can create for us a new politicai life and lead us into a nobler political activity."[1] (italics ours.)

But among some workingmen and a few middle class idealists a new political solution was beginning to germinate. Men like James H. Maurer and his colleagues who laid the foundation for the Reading socialist movement in the fifteen years immediately following Montgomery's observation would scarcely have been considered members

[1]Montgomery, Morton L., *History of Berks County in Pennsylvania,* Everts, Peck & Richards, Philadelphia, 1886, p. 3.

of the "better class" by this lawyer-historian. What men such as Maurer lacked in "formal education, experience, influence, and wealth" at the time were to be more than compensated for through their understanding of economic, political, and social problems derived from experience in trades union and Socialist party activities. It probably would have been difficult for Montgomery and other members of his class to fully comprehend this type of political leadership which emerged from below, as it was difficult in later decades for the "better class" contemporaries of Reading socialists and labor leaders to objectively appraise the contributions to political thought and action made by these working class representatives. And yet contrary to Montgomery's wishful hope, this latter group contributed much toward the creation of a "new political life" for the city.

It is essential to recognize at the outset that the socialist movement in Reading[2] had no distinct class orientation prior to the closing years of the 19th century. Prior to that time social reformers, humanitarians, and free-thinkers from diverse socio-economic strata in Reading, as in other American communities, were groping about for some new dogma that might provide a solution for the troublesome problems that confronted their expanding civilization. Following the unity convention of the Socialist party in Indianapolis in 1901, the local group geared its program to Marxian or "scientific", as distinct from utopian or Christian socialistic principles. While some individuals were still active in support of the latter type of socialist point of view, the working class–trade union element became dominant, with little, if any active support from middle or upper-class humanitarians. It was this group that forged a strong local

[2]It must be understood that the Reading socialist movement includes within its scope not only the party organization and leaders but also the large group of non-socialist voters who supported the party's candidates and program. We shall analyze the respective roles of all of these elements, recognizing that the sources of data on the party organization and activities are more tangible and accessible than those of the group outside the party which contributed voting support. In the present chapter, attention is directed to the origin of the movement and its expansion as measured by increased socialist registration, voting support, and election to office of socialist candidates. Chapter 3 includes an analysis of Socialist party organization, ideology, and the extent to which socialist principles were carried into effect. In Chapter 5, the characteristics of the group that supported the Socialist party, together with our method of determining the characteristics, are analyzed.

Socialist party which grew in strength throughout the following decades. It was able to withstand the entrenched opposition of non-socialist groups, and it successfully avoided the disintegrative influences within the Party itself which divided and weakened the national organization after World War I.[3]

The movement which was to have a significant influence directly in the political and economic life of the city's working class, and indirectly in the activities of other socio-economic classes, had its beginning in Reading among a small group of liberal thinkers which during the eighties and nineties included trade unionists, single taxers, religious freethinkers, Bellamyites, Populists, and others. These men, many of whom were of Pennsylvania-German stock, served as the medium for the introduction of socialist ideas to the community; ideas which subsequently were to provide the foundation for an active and growing Socialist party—a party which drew its vitality and leadership from the class whose interests it professed to represent. This occurred at a time in the history of America when Marxian ideas were struggling for a foothold among the laboring classes. In 1876 socialist groups had formed the Working-men's Party of the United States in Philadelphia, which a year later became the Socialist Labor party of North America.[4] While this party was the dominant factor in the socialist movement in the United States for the next twenty years, there was no formal affiliation of Reading socialists with any national socialist group until August 1, 1896.

In the years prior to the formation of a section of the Socialist Labor party, the impact of various social reform movements was felt in local discussion groups which brought together individuals who were idealistically motivated in the direction of seeking a solution for the social conditions created by the industrial revolution in America. A few may have been familiar with the principles of Marxian socialism, and some were certainly aware of the potentiality of economic action evidenced by affiliation with the Knights of Labor and the subsequently organized American Federation of

[3]The local group, however, did not resist entirely the internal party dissension which split the national organization in 1936. This is discussed in Chapter 3.

[4]Hillquit, Morris, *History of Socialism in the United States,* Funk and Wagnalls, New York, 1903, p. 210.

Labor. But probably most of the local persons interested in social and economic reform were favorably disposed toward programs which offered an idealistic or utopian reorganization of society as a means for resolving the conflicts of interest with their disastrous social consequences. Henry George's proposal of a single tax upon land as a means for redistributing wealth had its adherents, including James Maurer, who in his autobiography refers to the trip which he and his two brothers took on the Single Tax Special to the Chicago World's Fair in 1893, at which time Maurer met Henry George for the first time.[5]

The publication of Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* in 1888, which was so influential in the stimulation of thought along socialistic lines in America, had a continuing influence in Reading. Even late in the nineties many of the Reading socialists were more Bellamyites than Marxian socialists.[6] Bellamy's contention that

> "No business is so essentially the public business as the industry and commerce on which the peoples' livelihood depends, that to intrust it to private persons to be managed for private profit is a folly similar in kind, though vastly greater in magnitude to that of surrendering the functions of political government to kings and nobles to be conducted for their personal glorification."[7]

was certainly an integral part of the fundamental principles of social reorganization subscribed to by the Reading socialists in subsequent years.

The ideals of Christian socialism undoubtedly had a special appeal to those persons in a devoutly religious Pennsylvania-German community who saw the need for making their religious principles compatible with the society in which they lived. An old socialist, referring to the early days of the movement, said: "We were like religious converts, feeling that the Cooperative Commonwealth was just around the corner. We were motivated by the ideals of Christian socialism, and while we read the Communist Manifesto, we didn't

[5]Maurer, James H. *It Can Be Done,* The Rand School Press, New York, 1938, p. 109.
[6]Maurer, James H., Interview with the author, 1933.
[7]Bellamy, Edward, *Equality,* p. 17, quoted by James Dombrowski in *The Early Days of Christian Socialism in America,* Columbia University Press, New York, 1936, p. 88.

understand it. The idea of a cooperative commonwealth had a much greater appeal to us. In fact, it might be said that, down to 1905, many of us were primarily Christian socialists. In the earlier years we did not agree with the materialistic interpretation of history. In fact, some of us didn't like the idea of holding meetings and picnics on Sundays. In these earlier years most of the socialists were church-going, and in fact clergymen were active in the group. Later most of the Reading socialists were not active in church work, though they were not antagonistic toward religion, or for that matter toward the church."[8] This statement by Andrew P. Bower, who was very active in Reading socialism both prior to and after it developed as an organized movement, indicates the extent to which the idealistic motives of Christian socialism served to stimulate social and economic thought. In fact, there is some basis for the belief that "scientific socialism" according to Karl Marx had relatively little influence in Reading prior to the turn of the century. In an interview concerning the groups which were meeting in the late nineties for the discussion of topics concerning socialism, evolution, labor problems, etc., James Maurer made the observation that during these years "strangers" (who were really out-of-town socialists) drifted into these meetings and often made vicious attacks upon the topics and type of discussion being carried on. One Sunday evening when a group of this type was debating the subject, "Is man descended from monkey or God?" one of these itinerant Socialists "dropped in and gave them Hell," which knocked the cobwebs off the thinking of this group, according to Maurer.[9] The visitor remained several days, and after his departure the local group began to receive "real" socialist literature, probably from one of the national organizations. By "real" literature, Maurer obviously refers to socialist publications that stressed the "scientific" or Marxist point of view in socialist thought.

The Populist movement also had its adherents among liberals in Reading during the nineties. Bower relates that in 1895 there was a local People's party (not connected, however, with the national People's party) which nominated candidates for the school board

[8]Andrew P. Bower, Interview, 1941.
[9]James H. Maurer, Interview, 1933.

and waged quite a successful campaign. As a result this group decided to identify itself with the People's party of the United States, electing two delegates to attend the national convention of the People's party in July, 1896. At this convention one of these delegates favored the candidacy of Bryan and Sewall, the Democratic nominees endorsed by the People's party, while the other delegate, Charles Maurer,[10] aligned himself with the group that prepared its own platform, nominating Bryan and Watson. When these delegates returned, their respective reports precipitated a great deal of discussion over future policy of the local group. The decision ultimately arrived at was probably influenced by an edition of J. A. Wayland's *The Coming Nation* which published side by side the platforms of the Populist party and the Socialist Labor party.[11] Those members of the group who decided that their future lay with the Socialist Labor party met and on August 1, 1896[12] organized a section of that party, which at the time was under the national leadership of Daniel DeLeon. This decision by a faction of the local People's party to affiliate with the Socialist Labor party split the local organization, since quite a number of the influential members of the group decided to throw their support to the Democratic candidacy of Bryan and Sewall.

This formal affiliation of a local group with a national Marxian Socialist party probably marks the beginning of socialism as a class movement in Reading. Prior to this alliance with a Marxian group, persons who were interested in social reform were representative of all classes in the community including professional, business, and laboring groups. These reformers in the nineties found political expression for their ideas through the medium of the Populist movement. From 1896 on, socialism in Reading unloaded many of its middle class adherents and became more singly working class.

Whereas the period prior to 1896 was one of indecision with respect to formal affiliation with any group professing Marxian socialist principles, the five-year period from 1896 to 1901 was one

[10]Brother of James H. Maurer.

[11]The platform of the Socialist Labor Party is printed in Appendix II of Morris Hillquit's *History of Socialism in the United States.*

[12]This organization meeting took place in the home of Andrew P. Bower and included among its organizers A. P. Bower, Charles Maurer, I. P. Merkel, Samuel Wynn, and Harry Rudolf.

of indecision with respect to which specific Marxian party the local socialists were to support. Within scarcely more than a year after their alliance with the Socialist Labor party we find the local group receiving a charter from the Social Democracy of America.[13] Nationally, this latter group represented a fusion of the remnants of the American Railway Union, led by Eugene Debs, and the Brotherhood of Cooperative Commonwealth, organized in 1896 under the leadership of a midwestern group of liberals including J. A. Wayland, editor of *The Coming Nation* and its successor, *The Appeal to Reason.* J. A. Wayland was well known to Reading socialists since his publications had some thousands of subscribers in Reading at that time.[14]

The Reading socialists were organized under the charter from the Social Democracy of America until August 9, 1898, when they again joined the Socialist Labor party. This return to membership in the Socialist Labor party was of short duration, however, since the split in the national Socialist Labor party over the question of DeLeon's Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance (dual-unionism) was reflected locally in the affiliation of most of the Reading socialists with the Rochester or "Kangaroo" faction of the Socialist Labor party in 1899.[15] Early in 1900, Andrew Bower represented the Reading section of the S.L.P. at the meeting of the "Kangaroo" group in Rochester.

In 1898 the *Social Democratic Party of America* was organized by a group attending the first national convention of the Social Democracy of America in Chicago. This group, under the leadership of Eugene Debs and Victor Berger, had rejected the colonization schemes which were favored by a majority of the delegates and which had been responsible for drawing to the Social Democracy of America a variety of social reformers who believed that experimentation with utopian socialistic communities was the road to the realization of the cooperative commonwealth. On August 25, 1900, the Reading socialists received a charter from the *Social Democratic Party of*

[13]This charter, at present on the walls of the Socialist party headquarters in Reading, is dated October 27, 1897.

[14]Estimated by James Maurer at 5,000 in addition to several thousand free copies. Subscriptions were twenty-five cents a year.

[15]For a discussion of this factional fight in the national S.L.P., see Hillquit, *op cit.*, pp. 322-330.

the United States, thus affiliating themselves with the national group under the leadership of Debs and Berger which adhered to Marxian socialist principles rather than to utopian socialist ideas.

It was logical that the Reading socialists should form an alliance with the Social Democratic party, since earlier in the year they had identified themselves with the Kangaroo group of the S.L.P., which in turn through negotiations with the Social Democratic party had decided upon the endorsement of a joint ticket in the 1900 presidential election consisting of Eugene Debs for president and Job Harriman for vice-president. This united ticket polled more than 90,000 votes nationally, and 197 votes locally. The adherence of the majority of local Socialists to the group that represented an alliance between the Social Democratic party and the "Kangaroo" faction of the Socialist Labor party was reflected in the fact that Debs and Harriman received more than three times as many votes as the regular Socialist Labor party candidates in the 1900 election in Reading.[16]

The national Socialist party with which Reading socialists were affiliated for more than a third of a century, until a split in 1936, was organized at the Unity Convention held in Indianapolis on July 29, 1901. The Reading socialists were chartered by the united party that emerged from this convention, May 19, 1902.

While we have emphasized to this point some of the more important factors which led to the emergence and consolidation of the socialist group as a *political* entity, it is equally, if not more, important from the standpoint of later developments to stress the identification of early Reading socialists with the organized labor movement. James Maurer, for example, joined the Knights of Labor in 1880 when he was sixteen years old,[17] and before he was twenty he was elected District Master Workman, and in his own words, "never missed a meeting of my own organization nor of the District Assembly, which took in everything along the Schuylkill Valley between Reading and Philadelphia."[18] James Maurer's membership and leadership in the organized labor movement, covering a span of more than sixty years and including the presidency of the Pennsylvania

[16]See Table XVIII.
[17]Maurer, James H., *op. cit.*, p. 87.
[18]*Ibid.*, p. 100.

State Federation of Labor from 1912 to 1928,[19] parallels his identification with organized socialism which began with his membership in the Socialist Labor party in the nineties, subsequent affiliation with the Socialist party in 1901, and an active career in that party which led to his election to local and state offices and his candidacy for the vice-presidency of the United States on the Socialist ticket in 1928 and 1932. While the significance of this alliance between the political and economic leadership of the working class as a causal factor in the development of Reading socialism will be analyzed in Chapter 6, it is essential to bear in mind that some members of the organized labor movement in Reading looked upon the Socialist party as the logical medium for their political expression, thus creating an identity of interests between organized labor and the Party. In this respect the Reading socialists were from the outset in a more favored position to secure the ultimate support of organized workers. While members of organized labor were lending their support in considerable numbers in the early 1900's,[20] the continuing increase in the socialist vote during the decade probably reflected to some extent the increasing influence and elevation to executive positions within the labor movement of organized workers who had been converted to socialism in earlier years. For example, Andrew Bower who had been active in the organization of the first section of the Socialist Labor party in Reading and a frequent candidate for offices on the Socialist ticket, has been Secretary-Treasurer of the Federated Trades Council of Reading since 1906 and a Vice-president of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor since 1908. J. Henry Stump, twice-elected as Mayor of Reading (1927 and 1935) was President of the Federated Trades Council from 1916 to 1928. Stump is a member of Local No. 236 of the Cigar Makers International Union, the members of which were some of the most influential organizers of the Socialist party in its early years and whose influence continued in the party after this union declined in importance through the introduction of machinery in the cigar making industry. In addition, many other members of A. F. of L. craft unions, organized into

[19]*Ibid.*, p. 295.
[20]For example, A. P. Bower estimates that in 1900 there were approximately 5,000 members of organized labor affiliated with the Federated Trades Council. In 1902, the Socialist candidate for the Pennsylvania State Assembly received 1,218 votes. See Table XIII.

the Federated Trades Council in Reading in 1900, supported the Socialist party candidates.[21]

This tie-up between the labor movement and the Socialist party in Reading has been a crucial element in the development of socialism as a working class movement. As we shall note presently,[22] Reading socialism did not draw its vitality either in the form of leadership or support from non-working class elements, i.e., from intellectuals or professional people, although it undoubtedly received some support, though not leadership, from smaller middle class businessmen and probably others who, from an economic standpoint, may be defined as middle class. In this respect, it differed from the national Socialist organizations which drew some of their leadership from the formally educated, professional, and intellectual classes.[23] Evidence from persons active in reform movements in Reading in the nineties indicates that support for forms of social reorganization came from representatives of virtually all social strata. It is essential to emphasize, however, that the successive affiliations of Reading socialists with Marxian groups, beginning with the Socialist Labor party in 1896 and concluding with the Socialist party in 1901,[24] precipitated a residium of adherents to the Socialist party line who were *bona fide representatives of the working class,* active in the organized labor movement; socialists who had rejected both the dual unionism of DeLeon's Socialist Labor party and the utopian colonizing schemes of the majority faction of the *Social Democracy of America.* This group was to encounter no serious ideological split in its ranks for the next 35 years (1901-1936), even avoiding the disintegrative influence of the Communist defection in 1919 which considerably weakened the national organization, but left the local organization virtually unscathed, probably because of its dominant native-American composition.

[21]According to estimates of persons who are leaders in both the Socialist party and the Federated Trades Council.

[22]See Chapter 4.

[23]Daniel DeLeon, Socialist-Labor party, was a lecturer at Columbia University; Norman Thomas, Socialist party, is a Princeton graduate and a former Presbyterian minister; Maynard Krueger, Socialist party, is a member of the faculty of the University of Chicago; Jesse H. Holmes, Socialist party, was Professor of Philosophy at Swarthmore College.

[24]See Chapter 3 for a discussion of the split in the Socialist party in 1936 in which the majority of the Reading Socialists allied themselves with the right-wing faction.

Support for Socialist Candidates 1900-1940

The extent to which the Reading voters increasingly supported Socialist candidates for local, state, and national offices from 1900 to 1935 is the most significant as well as objective indication of the growth and influence of the Socialist party. Prior to 1902, the Reading socialist group never secured the support of more than approximately three hundred voters for their candidates, regardless of the particular socialist banner under which they ran for office. A change occurred in the fall of 1902, after formal affiliation with the newly created Socialist party when their candidates for the Pennsylvania Assembly and for the United States House of Representatives polled more than a thousand votes each, the equivalent of one-twelfth of all votes cast.[25]

Within eight years, in 1910, the local socialists succeeded in electing their first candidate to any office, when James H. Maurer, polling very nearly one-third of all votes, was elected to the Pennsylvania Assembly. It is interesting to note that this was the same year in which Victor L. Berger was elected from one of the Milwaukee districts as the first socialist Congressman.[26] Although Maurer was defeated for re-election in 1912, he succeeded in winning again in both 1914 and 1916. From 1918-1930, there were no socialist Representatives in the State Assembly, but in 1930 the socialists elected

[25]For a complete picture of both the number and percent of votes cast for candidates for certain municipal, county, state, and national offices from 1896 to 1940, see Tables XIII-XVIII. Because it would be unwieldy as well as unnecessary to give detailed voting statistics for *all* candidates for *all* offices in each year during this period, the author has selected certain offices for which voting statistics are considered sufficient as well as representative for purposes of this study. These statistics include those for the office of mayor (candidate for an exclusively local office); Pennsylvania Assembly (candidates for a state office from a legislative district coterminous with the municipality); County Controller (candidate for a county office representing both the municipality and the remainder of the county); Representative in the United States Congress (candidate representing a Congressional District coterminous with the county since 1930); and President of the United States. It should be noted that this selection includes candidates elected on the basis of issues ranging from those of a purely local nature, through county and state, to those of a purely national character. Supplementing this type of voting data is Table XII which includes the number and percent of votes cast for, as well as the names of, the principal Socialist candidates elected to office, 1910 to 1935; and Table XIX which includes the number and percent of voters registered in all parties from 1913 to 1941.

[26]Perlman and Taft, *History of Labor in the United States, 1896 to 1932* Vol. IV, Chapter 24.

both Representatives from the Reading Assembly District. In 1934, these representatives—Darlington Hoopes and Mrs. Lilith Wilson—each polled approximately fifty percent of all votes.

With respect to municipal offices, the socialists never polled more than five percent of the total vote prior to 1911. In the latter year, the socialist candidate, E. W. Leffler, very nearly succeeded in becoming the first socialist mayor of the city, polling over 5,000 votes—slightly less than a third of all votes. This near victory occurred in the year when the Socialist party throughout the United States was approaching the peak of its strength and influence.[27] In 1910 Emil Seidel had been elected mayor of Milwaukee and Daniel W. Hoan City Attorney, both on the Socialist ticket. The Reading socialists did succeed, however, in electing five ward representatives to the Common and Select Councils in 1911. In 1915, when the city changed over to a commission form of government, the socialist municipal vote dropped from a former high of 31 percent to 10 percent, largely through the operation of a newly enacted Non-Partisan election law which that year eliminated the listing of the Socialist candidate on the ballot. By 1919, when that law had been repealed, the socialist vote was greater in both number and proportion than ever before, despite the patriotic agitation against the socialists during 1917 and 1918. Particularly in 1918, this agitation had the effect of interrupting, momentarily, a trend toward the support of socialist candidates. In 1927 the socialists came into their own for the first time in a municipal election, placing the mayor, two members of the city council, the City Controller, and two members of the school board in office. Most of these candidates polled in the neighborhood of 12,000 votes, or approximately fifty percent of all votes. It is worth noting that four of these six successful candidates polled very nearly the same percentage of votes, indicative in this election, as in others for Reading socialist candidates, that the vote is for the party rather than for any specific individual. Two years later, in 1929, two additional socialists were elected to the school board and two to the city council. With the election of these two councilmen, the socialists for the first time assumed control of the municipal government, a control that extended to 1931, when all of the socialist candidates were defeated by a fusion of the Democratic and Republican parties.[28] In 1935, after four years of fusion rule, the socialists were swept back into office after a spectacular campaign in which the socialist candidates polled from 18 to 20 thousand votes each, representing from 46 to 50 percent of all votes. In this election the socialists reached the peak of their strength, securing control not only of most municipal offices (including 107 of a total of 196 local ward offices), but also electing three county officials for the first time. At a number of previous elections socialist candidates for county offices had received the majority of votes within the city, but these majorities were offset by the traditional strength of the Democratic party in the remainder of the county. The Pennsylvania-German farmers of Berks County had returned large majorities for Democratic candidates for generations so that the success of any socialist candidate for a county office indicated the growing strength of the Socialist party in an ultra-conservative rural environment. While the unusually heavy socialist vote within the city was of major importance in offsetting the rural vote, increasing socialist support in the rural portions of the county was an important factor in this initial triumph of a socialist candidate for a county office.[29] In addition, in 1935, the socialists secured control of the borough governments of Kenhorst and Laureldale, suburbs of Reading.

Socialist Congressional candidates received support throughout the years which compared favorably with the vote polled by candidates for local or state offices. Beginning with little over one percent of the vote in 1900, the socialist candidate for Congress from the district coterminous with Berks County received forty-five percent of the Reading vote in 1934. There were, however, two obstacles in the path of electing a socialist Congressman: First, the need of a majority of voters in the entire county (and prior to 1932, a majority in two counties—Berks and Lehigh—which together constituted a Congressional District at that time); and second, the threat of joint support of a single candidate by the Republican and Democratic

[27]According to the *Thirty-Fifth Anniversary Journal, Socialist Party,* Cleveland, 1936, there were 1,141 socialist officials in thirty-six states in 1912. This journal does not specify the number of minor officials included in this total.

[28]The methods used by their opponents to defeat the Socialists in this, as well as other campaigns, will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

[29]See footnote to Table XVI.

parties. The latter occurred in 1934, when a traditional three-party candidacy might readily have resulted in a socialist victory.

The degree to which socialist Presidential candidates were supported in elections from 1900 through 1932 is significant not only for the steady increase in the percent of votes received[30] (from 1.2 percent in 1900 to 30.5 percent in 1932), but also for the greater support given to the national socialist ticket than was characteristic of other socialist strongholds in the United States. As early as 1912 when Debs and Seidel polled the highest percent of the total vote ever received by the socialists in the United States—about 6 percent—they received 16 percent of the Reading vote.[31] Whereas the socialist vote declined nationally thereafter, the presidential vote in Reading fluctuated very little in succeeding elections. In 1928, Thomas and Maurer received 12.8 percent of the Reading vote, but only 6.8 percent in Milwaukee,[32] traditional socialist stronghold. In 1932, the percent for Thomas and Maurer increased to 30.5 as compared with 13.5 percent in Milwaukee and 8.6 percent in Bridgeport. When we consider that the socialist vote in the entire United States was scarcely more than two percent in 1932, the unusually high vote in Reading would seem to indicate that Reading socialists were willing to lend their support to socialist principles in an election where local issues were not involved. While the heavy vote in these years may be accounted for partially as a personal tribute to a "native son"—James H. Maurer—the fact still remains that in two successive elections (1928 and 1932), the percent increased from 12.8 to 30.5 percent *for the same candidates*. While the presidential percentages never exceeded those for other socialist candidates after 1908, their size was nevertheless impressive in comparison with either that of socialist candidates for local and state offices or with the vote for socialist candidates elsewhere in the United States. In passing, it might be mentioned that, prior to 1911, Reading socialist candidates for state and national offices received higher vote percentages than did candidates for local offices; in and after 1911, this trend was reversed.[33]

[30]See Table XVIII.
[31]Perlman and Taft, *op. cit.*, Vol. IV, Chapter 24.
[32]See Table XXIII.
[33]See Table XIII.

The expansion of socialist strength was paralleled, though not equalled, in those portions of Berks County lying outside the city. Support for socialist candidates was more sporadic and less extensive in the village and rural areas. Despite the arguments that are advanced for the traditional, if not "inevitable," opposition of farmers to the support of socialist candidates, these candidates, nevertheless, made a very creditable showing in the county district.[34] For example, in 1932, the socialist candidate for Congress polled 8,000, or the equivalent of one-fifth of these votes, and the socialist candidate for president polled more than 6,000 votes, or about 15 percent. In 1935, the socialists reached the peak of their strength in the non-Reading districts when their candidate for County Controller polled more than 8,000 votes, the equivalent of more than 21 percent of the total vote. The bulk of socialist strength outside the city is concentrated in several working class suburbs and in small industrial communities chiefly in the southern portion of the county. To anyone familiar with the conservative character of persons residing in these county districts—with their traditional adherence to the Democratic party—the emergence of any percentage of socialist vote, especially for a socialist Presidential candidate is surprising.

Throughout the years, socialist candidates have, with two exceptions,[35] invariably polled more votes than the number registered in the Socialist party. In local elections, the percent of socialist votes has been anywhere from three to eleven times greater than the percent of persons registered in the party. (See Table 2 below). In 1927, when the socialists first secured control of the municipal government, only 4.6 percent of the voters registered socialist, whereas more than 50 percent voted socialist. In 1935, when the socialists again returned to power, receiving almost one-half of all votes, only 15 percent of all voters were registered in the party.[36] Thus at the

[34]See Tables XVI, XVII, and XVIII for typical examples of the socialist vote in the county (exclusive of Reading). The official Socialist party organization with headquarters in Reading is known as "Local Berks, Socialist party of Pennsylvania," and includes within its jurisdiction the organization of the entire county with branches both in Reading and outside communities.
[35]See Table XX. In the 1936 and 1940 Presidential elections, the socialist vote was merely one-third of the socialist registration.
[36]An interesting characteristic of voting, generally, in Reading was the high percentage of registered voters who turned out at elections. These percentages ranged from 89 to 96 percent from 1916 through 1935. Although slightly

peak of its strength, less than one-third of the persons who supported the socialist ticket were registered in the party. In this same year, the picture was essentially the same in the county districts where the socialists polled more than 8,000 votes which was three times greater than the socialist registration.[37] In national elections the city vote has been from two to six times greater than the socialist registration, with the exception of the 1936 and 1940 Presidential campaigns when the socialist percentage dropped considerably. This decline can be attributed to a combination of reasons. First, the shift of the protest and labor vote to Franklin D. Roosevelt as a

TABLE 2

RATIOS OF PERCENT OF VOTE FOR MAYOR OR PRESIDENT TO PERCENT OF REGISTRATION FOR THE SOCIALIST, DEMOCRATIC, AND REPUBLICAN PARTIES, READING, PENNSYLVANIA, 1916-1940.

Year	Election for	Socialist	Democratic	Republican
1916	President	2.60	1.05	.99
1919	Mayor	4.86	.51	.94
1920	President	2.52	.82	1.02
1923	Mayor	6.10	1.01	.51
1924	President	6.51	.61	.98
1927	Mayor	11.09	.48	.61
1928	President	2.91	.76	1.04
1931	Mayor	3.36	.56	.74
1932	President	2.68	.77	.84
1935	Mayor	3.24	.66	.55
1936	President	.35	1.28	.82
1939	Mayor	3.73	.74	.66
1940	President	.30	1.18	.96

Note (a) Reference to Table XIX will indicate that two or three percent of the voters in any year registered as non-partisan. The distribution of these votes among the major parties at the general election must be considered in the interpretation of the above ratios. However, it is quite probable that many non-partisan registrants support Socialist candidates.

Note (b) In comparing these ratios, it must be recognized that a shift in an equivalent number of votes will increase or decrease the Socialist ratio in a greater proportion than the Democratic or Republican, because of the relatively small registration in the Socialist Party.

higher in national elections, these high percentages indicated an unsual degree of electoral participation, and may probably be attributed, in part at least, to interest aroused by the Socialists in both local and national issues. As noted in Table XIX A, the percentages dropped after a permanent registration law became effective in 1935.

[37]In this year, the socialists polled 9,386 votes for County Controller in the districts lying outside the city, whereas the Socialist registration numbered 2,744 in this area.

means of insuring the defeat of the Republican candidate; second, the recency of the split in the national Socialist party in 1936 between the Thomas, or left-wing, faction and the right-wing faction (which the majority of local socialists supported)—a split which did weaken local party solidarity; and third, the fact that James Maurer, a "native son", was not the vice-presidential candidate as he had been in 1928 and 1932.

The discrepancy between the socialist registration and vote is the result of a combination of factors. First, there is no contest between socialist candidates for nomination in the primary election, since they are chosen at a party caucus. The registration of voters by parties is chiefly designed to determine eligibility for the nomination of party standard-bearers in the primary election, but there is little need or incentive for socialists to be eligible to vote at the primary. Second, the fear of the loss of one's job through public identification with a party opposed by the employing class, especially in the earlier years when a number of employees were discharged at leading industrial plants because of their socialist affiliations, has been a real deterrent to many voters to making their socialist preference a matter of public record. While open participation in the activities of the Socialist party had become somewhat more respectable in later years, the extent to which socialist ideas and practices continued to be stigmatized by the oppostion in all elections continued to operate as a deterrent to those whose open sympathy with the socialist program might have involved a threat to their source of livelihood.

In earlier years, opponents accused the socialists of registering in the Democratic or Republican parties in order to weaken the strength of the latter parties through lending their support to the nomination of the least desirable candidates at the primary election. There seems to have been no basis for this accusation, not only because of its repeated denial by socialists themselves, but because influential leaders of other parties have felt that it lacked any basis in fact.[38] Another reason for doubting this contention is that the vote for the traditional parties is usually much larger at the general elec-

[38]Wellington Bertolet, a Republican attorney who managed the Fusion campaign against the Socialists in 1931, voiced this opinion in an interview on April 10, 1941.

tion than in the primary election. For example, in 1927, the Republican election vote was double the primary vote.[39]

Because of the consistently low Socialist registration, the question naturally arises concerning the party source of the larger socialist representation in the general election. An examination of the ratios of the percent of voting strength to the percent of registration for each of the parties, as shown above in Table 2, is revealing in this respect.[40] A comparison of these ratios in Presidential years from 1916 to 1940 shows that the Republican party held its own from 1916 through 1928, declined in 1932 and 1936 and only began to come back in 1940. The Democratic party held its own in 1916, but declined considerably from 1920 through 1932; but it came back in 1936, when it polled a vote that was 28 percent larger than its registration. This latter gain is even more significant when we realize that the Democratic registration had itself increased considerably during the New Deal years—an increase that is quite understandable inasmuch as more voters tended to ally themselves with parties that were in power because of the prospect of political jobs. A similar trend is noticeable in the Republican registration during the previous decade, and even in the Socialist registration after 1927.[41] The unusual increase in the 1936 Democratic ratio came largely from a shift in support from registered socialists whose vote in that year for the first time was less than their registration. The socialist ratios in Presidential years prior to 1936 remained fairly constant except in 1924 when the unusual increase reflected both socialist and non-socialist support for the Progressive candidacy of LaFollette and Wheeler. That most of this increase was at the expense of the Democratic party is evident in the reduction of the Democratic vote to 60 percent of its registration, whereas the Republican ratio remained constant.

In the Mayoralty years from 1919 to 1939, the ratios of vote to registration in the various parties fluctuate considerably. Among the socialists, there was an unusual increase from 1919 to 1927, and the relative decrease in 1931 and 1935 resulted from an increased

[39]See Henry G. Hodges, *op. cit.*, p. 281.
[40]For basic data in Table 2, see Tables XIV, XVIII, XIX, XX, XXI, and XXII.
[41]See Table XIX.

Socialist registration rather than a decrease in voting support. A comparison of the shifts in the Democratic and Republican ratios indicates that in 1919 the Socialist candidates benefited at the expense of the Democrats, whereas in 1923 their positions were reversed and only one-half of the registered Republicans supported their candidate. In 1927, when even the socialists were surprised at their success in electing a city administration, the unusual shift of voters to the socialist standard was at the expense of *both* the Republican and Democratic groups, with the defection a little more pronounced in the case of the latter party.[42] A further comparison of the ratios shows that the Democrats shifted to a slightly greater degree than the Republicans in 1931, but that the reverse occurred in 1935 when a larger proportion of Republican registrants supported the Socialist ticket. This reversal was also true in 1939. Thus, we find that the progressive increase in voting support for local Socialist candidates was not the result of a shift from any one traditional party but rather fluctuated over this twenty year period.

The split[43] in the national Socialist party in 1936 was reflected in a decline both of registration and voting for socialist candidates. From 1937 to 1940 the socialist percent of registered voters declined from 13.4 to 8.6, though there was a slight upturn to 9.6 in 1941. Whether this increase in the latter year indicates a recovery of support for the Socialist party remains to be seen. The socialist registration has always run in cycles,[44] tending to decline in years following new high levels. However, the decline after 1935 persisted for a longer time than usual, and it is difficult to evaluate the relative extent to which (a) the normal cyclical fluctuations, and (b)

[42]This defection did not warrant, however, the conclusion of Hodges (*op. cit.*, p. 282) that it was the Independents and the Democrats who elected the Socialists, with the help of about 2,000 Republican votes and only 1,238 registered Socialist votes. Hodges was led to his conclusion that the socialist success of 1927 was overwhelmingly a Democratic revolt because of an unfortunate error in the total Republican vote on which he based his analysis. He stated that the Republican candidate for Mayor received 10,957 votes whereas the official Republican total was only 7,077. (Official records, Berks County Court House.) This overestimate of virtually 4,000 Republican votes which, in fact, had been shifted to the Socialist candidate, accounted for Hodges' erroneous conclusion. In fact, it was the "revolt" of thousands of voters in both of the traditional parties which contributed so much to the election of the Socialists.
[43]See Chapter 3, *Party Organization.*
[44]See Table XIX.

the split in the party, and (c) the shift to New Deal support, contributed to this change. While the decline in Presidential support in 1936 and 1940 could readily have resulted from a shift of the protest vote to Roosevelt, as previously mentioned, the loss of support for candidates for the Pennsylvania Assembly and the United States Congress in 1936 and 1938 can probably be attributed more to internal party dissension. Even in the election of 1939, the percent of socialist vote for Mayor dropped to 38 percent, lower than it had been since 1923.

MILWAUKEE AND BRIDGEPORT

Because Bridgeport and Milwaukee are usually bracketed with Reading as socialist cities, a few comparisons of the expansion of the socialist vote in these other cities are in order.[45] In 1910, Emil Seidel was elected the first socialist mayor of Milwaukee, receiving 46 percent of the vote. Coinciding with the expansion of the Socialist party throughout the United States, Jasper McLevy received 24 percent of the vote for mayor in Bridgeport in 1911, the same year in which Edward Leffler polled 30 percent of the vote in Reading, though neither the Bridgeport nor Reading candidate was elected. Milwaukee elected its next socialist mayor in 1916, when Daniel Hoan, running for this office for the first time, received over 51 percent of the vote. Hoan was re-elected continuously until 1940, thus serving as Mayor of Milwaukee for twenty-four consecutive years.[46] In Bridgeport, the vote for socialist candidates increased markedly during the great Depression, and McLevy, who had run for the office many times since 1911, was finally elected as the first socialist mayor of Bridgeport in the fall of 1933, continuing in office since that time. In these cities, their respective Socialist parties nominated the same candidate for the office of mayor over a considerable number of years; in Bridgeport, since 1911, in Milwaukee, since 1916, and in Reading, since 1919. The statement has frequently been made

[45]See Tables XXIV-XXVIII. The data for Bridgeport and Milwaukee are not as complete as those for Reading, because this study is primarily concerned with the latter city.

[46]For a description of the Socialist administration of Milwaukee, see Daniel W. Hoan, *City Government: The Record of the Milwaukee Experiment*, Harcourt, Brace and Co., New York, 1936.

that these socialists were elected more because of their great personal popularity than because of their affiliation with the Socialist party. While these men have undoubtedly developed a great personal following, it is worth noting that in Bridgeport[47] and in Reading[48] there is comparatively little difference between the vote for mayor and the vote for most of the other socialist candidates. In Milwaukee, there are greater discrepancies. For example, in 1920 and 1932, Hoan ran slightly ahead, while in 1924 and 1928, he ran far ahead of some of the other socialist candidates.[49] Thus it seems that this lead of one socialist candidate over another (indicative of personal support in addition to party support) is characteristic only of Milwaukee and there only in certain years. The significance of this difference will be discussed in Chapter 5.

While detailed data on the Presidential vote in Milwaukee and Bridgeport during the past forty years are not at hand for comparison with the statistics available for Reading, comparative data for several Presidential elections are nevertheless revealing. In 1932, the most recent year in which the socialists polled a considerable number of votes in a national election, the percentage was 13.5 in Milwaukee, compared with 30.5 in Reading, and only 8.6 in Bridgeport. Also, in 1928, the socialist percentage in Reading was almost double that of Milwaukee.[50]

SOCIALIST VOTE IN OTHER CITIES, 1927-1935

No attempt is made here to outline or compare the strength of the Socialist party in American cities in its heyday (1912), when, as pointed out earlier, there were more than a thousand socialist officials in thirty-six states.[51] Our purpose is rather to show that in the years 1927 to 1935, when socialist strength was considerable in Reading, Bridgeport, and Milwaukee, socialist support was very weak, or even non-existent, in the other American cities[52] selected for

[47]See Table XXIV.
[48]See Table XII.
[49]See note attached to Table XXVI.
[50]See Tables XVIII, XXV, and XXVIII.
[51]See Chapter 2.
[52]See Table XXIII. For example, Allentown and Lancaster (Pennsylvania-German cities), New Bedford, Fall River, and Paterson (textile cities), and Erie, Elizabeth, Canton, and Utica (cities equal in size to Reading). The vote

comparative purposes in this study. Among these selected cities, no socialist candidate received more than 2.5 percent of the vote for Mayor, and in the Presidential elections of 1928 and 1932, the highest percent which Thomas and Maurer received was 5.7 in Erie, Pennsylvania. It is particularly significant that these percentages were quite low in cities which are highly industrialized. While the latter type of cities have large Catholic populations,[53] it is inconceivable that the religious factor provides an adequate explanation, especially since two of the most powerful Socialist cities have large Catholic constituencies.[54]

OTHER LEFT-WING PARTIES

When variations in the vote for socialist candidates in the cities noted in the preceding paragraphs are examined, the question suggests itself as to whether these differences in the degree of socialist support are not accounted for by greater support of other left-wing parties, such as the socialist-labor, or communist groups. The answer must be in the negative. Among the cities selected, including Reading, Bridgeport, and Milwaukee, the communist candidates for either Mayor or President in the years 1927 to 1935 *never received more than .6 of one percent of the vote;* and in most cases they received less.[55] Likewise, the socialist-labor party candidates never received more than .6 of one percent of the vote in any of these cities, and they were represented in the returns of only a few.[56]

SUMMARY

The socialist movement in Reading originated among groups of social reformers who at various times prior to 1896 identified themselves with the proposals advanced by Henry George, Edward Bellamy, the

for socialist candidates in these cities was secured through correspondence with election officials. Replies were not received from officials in Lebanon, Penna., Lowell, Mass., and Wilmington, Del., cities originally included with the above.

[53] *E.g.,* the percentage of church members who are Roman Catholic range from approximately 46 percent in Paterson, to 72 percent in New Bedford, and 78 percent in Fall River and Lowell.

[54] The percentage of church members who are Roman Catholic is 53 percent in Milwaukee, and 62 percent in Bridgeport. Contrast this with Reading whose church population is only 30 percent Roman Catholic.

[55] See Table XXIII.

[56] See foonotes to Table XXIII.

Populists, Christian socialists, utopian socialists, Marxian socialists, and others. The organized movement emerged in 1896 with the formation of a section of the Socialist-Labor party; finding its bearings five years later in affiliation with the united Socialist party, founded in 1901 in Indianapolis. Closely allied with organized labor, the movement grew steadily, electing socialists to office beginning with a State Assemblyman in 1910, and culminating in the election of a second socialist municipal administration in 1935. The movement was weakened in 1936 because of a split in the national organization; the majority of local socialists siding with the right-wing faction, represented nationally by the Social Democratic Federation. Socialist power in Reading since the first World War was paralleled in only two other American cities—Bridgeport, Conn., and Milwaukee, Wis.—though the latter differ culturally from Reading in many respects.

Chapter 3

PRINCIPLES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

This chapter will state the official ideology of the socialist movement in Reading, and over against this, principles actually adhered to whenever the socialists had an opportunity to act upon them. The activities of Reading socialists as party members, municipal officials, school directors, state legislators, and trade unionists will be examined. This will involve, first, an appraisal of their "good government" aspect as manifested in control of the municipality, recognizing that the possibilities of realizing any socialistic principles are limited by the control over municipal authority exercised by the state government. Second, the "reform" or "compromise" character as evidenced in the espousal of working class interests *within* the political framework of a capitalistic society, as well as, third, the consistency of their activities with the ideology of the dominant American Socialist party, will be evaluated. This comparison between socialist principles and the activities of Reading socialists should provide a reasonably definite answer to the question, "Are any genuinely socialist principles involved in the Reading movement?" Or in other words, what happened to "socialism" when it was transplanted to this American city?

The formal principles which have guided the course of American socialism during the present century are contained in the platform of the party adopted in the unity convention held at Indianapolis in 1901.[1] These are class conflict; the organization of the working class into a political party; the socialization of industry; "immediate demands" covering social and economic reform within the capitalistic system; and the ultimate goal of a cooperative commonwealth. Conspicuous by their absence are any reference to (1) the use of violent or revolutionary means for the seizure of political power; (2) utopian socialistic experiments[2] or cooperative colonies, which had commanded the attention of many socialists during the 19th

[1]Quoted in Morris Hillquit, *op. cit.*, pp. 349-351.
[2]*Ibid.*, Part I.

century;[3] (3) Christian socialist ideals,[4] which had motivated many reformers during the latter part of the 19th century; and (4) the principle of dual unionism, advocated by DeLeon[5] and his faction within the Socialist Labor party, which involved the setting up of labor unions under control of the party.

In analyzing the extent to which the activities of Reading socialists measured up to the avowed aims of the national party, it must be borne in mind that implicit throughout is the adherence to evolutionary and democratic, rather than revolutionary and dictatorial, means for the eventual realization of socialistic goals.

ACTIVITIES AS A PARTY

The clearest evidence of capable leadership and coordinated expenditure of effort is found in the unity of purpose that characterized all activities of the Reading Socialist party. The devices and techniques employed had one common denominator—that of bringing socialist ideas before the maximum number of persons in the community. An efficient party organization, street meetings, their own newspaper, radio programs, the "flying squadron", and picnics and socials all were used. It is noteworthy that any medium employed to spread the faith was characterized by a real attempt to interpret socialist issues in terms that would be understandable to the average man or woman—which meant, as far as Reading and Berks county were concerned, that these issues had to be made intelligible to persons of Pennsylvania-German descent. The noticeable conservatism of Pennsylvania-Germans was stressed in an earlier chapter. They have been described as honest, sincere, slow-moving, stubborn, com-

[3]In 1897, even the Reading group ventured upon an abortive coöperative colony experiment when two enthusiastic supporters turned their 300 acre farm in Schuylkill County, including buildings and stock, over to the Reading socialists for use as a colony. James H. Maurer in his autobiography, *op. cit.*, p. 114, describes the fate of this experiment as follows: "The colony was started in 1897, and most of the colonists managed to arrive late in the fall after all the farm work had been done. The whole outfit stayed through the winter and ate up everything on the farm, but with the arrival of spring—and work—nine-tenths of the loafers cleared out and that was the end of the colony."
[4]Dombrowski, J., *The Early Days of Christian Socialism in America,* Columbia University Press, New York, 1936.
[5]Hillquit, Morris, *op. cit.*, pp. 301-304.

placent, and satisfied with the ways of their ancestors, which meant that any attempt to introduce a novel idea—especially one involving a proposed fundamental reorganization of their economic life—would have to be introduced by persons of their own kind who were familiar with the prejudices and mental processes of their people. The Pennsylvania-Germans are a people unusually conscious of their habits and beliefs as a system, followed with consistency and accepted as a system as a whole—a way of life. The presence of Maurer helped to get socialism dramatized, and the fact that it was of German origin in Europe made it reverberate familiar things in their lives. Then, once having accepted it, they hung to it with equal consistency. In addition, the fact that these "conservatives" could be aroused to rethinking their social and economic problems, and thereby stimulated to act in the direction of finding a solution for them, is a tribute to mass education and propaganda, particularly since its leadership emanated from "below."

The unceasing labor of Reading socialists throughout the years to insure a wider circulation of their ideas may also be regarded as symbolic of devotion to a common cause. Although the other political parties have certain ideals of public service (at least during some phase of their evolution), and have devoted leaders and followers, their survival over any extended period of time is usually reinforced with a back-log of economic support for their career workers, either in the form of financial angels or job patronage of a local, state, or federal nature. For more than a quarter-of-a-century,[6] during which the Reading socialists built up and perfected their organization, no support of this sort was forthcoming; and this meant that the chief motivations for party workers had to be of a more intangible nature, such as belief in an ideology, plus the rewards that are inherent in working together toward a goal that is considered worthwhile.

In 1901, the platform[7] of the Socialist party of America adopted at the Indianapolis Unity convention stated that

> "The workers can most effectively act as a class in their struggle against the collective powers of capitalism by constituting themselves into a political party, distinct from and opposed to all parties formed by the propertied classes."

[6]The possibility of job patronage did not exist until the Socialists secured control of the municipal government in 1928.

[7]Hillquit, M., *op. cit.*, p. 350.

And in 1936 (both before and after the split in the party) essentially the same objective was defined in the Constitution[8] of Local Berks, Socialist Party of Pennsylvania, as follows:

> "The object of this local shall be to organize the working class, and all those who accept the principles of Socialism, into a political party for the purpose of securing all the powers of government, and using them solely in the interest of those who render useful service to society."

It has been axiomatic in socialist thought that the working class must use both political and economic means for the attainment of their ends; that one is insufficient without the other. On a national scale, during the first third of the 20th century, the American Federation of Labor was the most powerful representative of labor on the economic front, and the Socialist party was the most extensively organized political party representing the interests of the working class; and yet these two organizations were never able to cooperate —in fact, were at times openly hostile to one another.[9] This was chiefly because the desire of Socialist party leaders for joint action was not reciprocated by the Federation leadership. Hillquit, who was one of the most influential of American socialists during this period, contended that

> "The main weakness of American Socialism and American trade unionism lies in their failure of mutual cooperation."
>
> "In practically all other industrial countries of the world the Socialist parties and labor unions invariably cooperate as two divisions of the same movement. The political efforts of the one and the economic struggles of the other are considered by the workers of those countries as nothing more than a practical separation of functions within the organized labor movement."[10]

Whereas the weakness referred to by Hillquit characterized the national movement, the existence of cooperation was one of the main sources of strength for the Reading movement. After the reorganiza-

[8]Art. II, Sec. 1.

[9]Lorwin, L. L., *The American Federation of Labor,* The Brookings Institution, Washington, 1933, pp. 31, 73-74, 91, 433.

[10]Hillquit, M., *Loose Leaves from a Busy Life,* Macmillan, New York, 1934, p. 105. By permission of the Macmillan Company, publishers.

tion of Reading trade union locals into the *Federated Trades Council* in 1900, the men who came to occupy positions of labor leadership in subsequent decades were at the same time active leaders in the Socialist party.[11] The socialist sympathies of the rank and file of trade unionists were also evidenced in the fact that 95 percent of the delegates to the Federated Trades Council were socialists.[12] While the Council on only one occasion passed a resolution *officially* endorsing the socialist candidates, the socialist affiliation and activity of trade unionists signified a mutuality of interest that rendered any formal declaration of joint political and economic action unnecessary, if not superfluous.[13] In 1939 an *Industrial Council,* consisting of local unions affiliated with the CIO, was set up. Its relations with the Federated Trades Council (AFL) have been amicable. Both groups support socialistic candidates in local elections, and in 1940 the CIO group endorsed one of the socialist candidates for the State Assembly.

The Socialist party differs from other political organizations functioning in Reading in that it operates under a constitution,[14] has a dues-paying, selected membership, and engages continuously in political, educational, social, and propagandist activities. In addition, its candidates for public office, entitled to exclusive party support, are chosen in a caucus participated in by party members.

Party Organization

The Reading socialist group is part of the Local Berks organization, which in turn is an integral part of the Socialist party of Pennsylvania.[15] Prior to 1936, the state organization was part of the Socialist party of America; but thereafter it became affiliated with the Social-Democratic Federation of America, under the national

[11]See chapters 2 and 3.
[12]Interview with J. Henry Stump.
[13]This politico-economic community of interest has its counterpart on a different class level in the professional-proprietary-managerial leadership of the Republican party.
[14]The constitutions of (1) Local Berks, Socialist Party (1935), and (2) Local Berks, Socialist Party of Penna. (1936) should be compared for changes following from the party split in 1936.
[15]The seat of the State Committee (right wing) is in Reading, with its Executive Committee composed entirely of Reading socialists.

chairmanship of Jasper McLevy, Mayor of Bridgeport. This latter group consists of the "right-wing" faction which split away from the national party in 1936. The "left-wing" faction continued as the Socialist party of the United States under the leadership of Norman Thomas. The split resulted from a long-standing feud between the "Old Guard" and the "Militants", and was precipitated in 1935-36 when the latter group advocated a united front with other left-wing parties. There was considerable difference of opinion among Reading socialists as to how far they should support a national organization that seemed to be veering toward control by the more militant elements within the party.[16] In June of 1936 James Maurer issued an appeal to Reading socialists to reject these more radical principles, and early in July he resigned from the national organization. Undoubtedly fresh in his mind were the disruptive tactics of the militant (Communist) element in 1919 and after, which through its defection had dealt the national party a shattering blow and stripped it of three-fourths of its membership.[17] In the Fall of 1936, the issue came to a head in local circles after the return of delegates from the State convention. The party was divided, each faction claiming to be the legally constituted Local Berks organization of the Socialist party, and the courts had to be resorted to for determining which faction was entitled to party funds. While there was undoubtedly a real difference of opinion among local socialists as to how far the policies of the militant element in the national party should be endorsed, it is doubtful that this issue by itself could have disrupted the local organization to the extent that it did. The situation was aggravated by the cumulation of internal party differences over control and job patronage, and the "Old Guard" element in the local organization did not want to yield any more power than necessary to the younger and more militant members. Within a few years, however, most of the differences among local socialists were ironed out, with the "right-wing" group retaining its dominance as the local Socialist party, though considerably weakened. As far as the state

[16]As far as any actual Communist infiltration into the local group was concerned, it was usually nipped in the bud. Whenever any local socialists developed Communist sympathies, they were immediately read out of the party.
[17]It must be stated, however, that Maurer was very much impressed with the Soviet experiment in Russia, having visited that country in 1927. See his autobiography, *op. cit.*, pp. 288-292.

factions were concerned, the "left-wing" element later supported Reading socialists for local offices, while the Reading group supported "left-wing" Socialist nominees in the gubernatorial and presidential elections. In fact, a prominent member of the state "left-wing" organization stated to the author that more recently the Reading group was the only Social-Democratic affiliate that cooperated with the Socialist party of the United States (left wing).

The jurisdiction of the Local is limited by the State Party Constitution, and in addition (prior to 1936) was limited by the Constitution of the national organization. Early in the thirties, the Local had 23 branches in the city and county, but recently the number has been reduced to 11, of which five are in the city. A County Committee, consisting of delegates from the various branches chosen in the ratio of one delegate to each 25 members, meets monthly for the transaction of the routine business of the Local. There are a number of standing committees (whose activities are implicit in the ensuing discussion), of which the Executive Committee is the most powerful. This latter committee was created by the new 1936 Constitution and is composed of 15 members. The Constitution states that the Executive Committee

> ". . . shall carry out the policies of the Local; promote educational work within the Party; have charge of all publicity and propaganda activities including literature, radio, and lecture fields; supervise all party and political organization work; and promote and direct all campaign activities."[18]

Prior to 1936, these functions had been distributed among other standing committees. The net result of this centralization of functions was to give more power to the Executive Committee.

A new member is admitted to the Local only after his application has been sponsored by a member in good standing for at least six months, passed upon by the particular branch, and ratified by the County committee. Members must pay dues of thirty-five cents a month, with provision for exemption in cases of unemployment or sickness. In size, the dues-paying membership of the Party totalled about 50 in 1927 when the first Socialist mayor was elected, rose to about 1,000 by 1931 when the Socialist administration was defeated,

[18]Art. IX, Sec. 1 (a).

and reached a peak of about 1,800 in 1935—the year when the Party received the largest vote (20,575 for its mayoralty candidate who was elected), and had the largest registration (6,774) in its history. By April, 1941, the paid-up membership had dropped to less than 700. A considerable proportion of the increased registration and membership in 1935 can probably be accounted for by the prospect of jobs, since a Socialist victory in the fall of that year had been virtually assured by State legislation of the previous year directed against fusion candidates.

Candidates for public office who will receive the endorsement of the Socialist party are selected in a caucus held in the late spring of each year. Only members of at least two years' standing are eligible to participate in the selection of candidates for other than minor offices; while all candidates selected for public office

> "shall have been in continuous good standing and actively engaged in the affairs of the Socialist party for at least three years immediately preceding such selection."[19]

The selection of candidates is thus rigorously controlled by the party membership, with tremendous influence wielded within this group by older party members and leaders, though there is still probably a greater opportunity afforded to the *rank and file* of members to participate in the selection of *officially endorsed* nominees than would be the case within the inner circles of other parties. As a result, the primary election is a mere formality as far as Socialist candidates are concerned. Any attempt to secure a Socialist listing by petition on the Primary ballot would never receive party endorsement; and any party member who sought as an individual to secure a Socialist nomination would be expelled from the party.

Socialist candidates elected to office are required under threat of expulsion from the party,[20] to carry out the policies approved by the Local and State organizations. In fact, the Local Constitution provides for a committee of eleven members to act in an advisory capacity to Socialist public officials.[21] In the earlier years Socialist candidates were required to file pre-signed letters of resignation with the party which would be submitted to the government authority if

[19]*Local Berks Constitution (1936),* Art. XI, Sec. 3.
[20]*Ibid.,* Art. XII, Sec. 1.
[21]*Ibid.,* Art. IX, Sec. 1 (b).

the candidate should deviate from the party line after election to public office.[22] In 1927 a socialist official made a public statement to the effect that that policy had been discontinued years previously.[23]

Propaganda

The value of keeping their message constantly before the people and of interpreting the issues according to socialist principles in language that the average Pennsylvania-German could understand was recognized from the beginning. James Maurer once remarked to the author that "since eight out of ten Pennsylvania Dutchmen did not read beyond the headlines," it was necessary to print short, concise articles that avoided the "heavy stuff." Such a policy was followed in socialist campaign literature, although it underwent modification with the passage of time and the increased receptivity to socialist ideas.

For years the Reading daily newspapers were either passively or openly hostile to the socialists. This policy was changed during the twenties when the large socialist mass support required a reasonably unbiased presentation of news in the interest of maintaining circulation. One of the newspapers has not printed editorials for approximately 25 years, though opinions have been reflected at times in the treatment and position given to news articles. The other daily newspaper (until its recent merger) did at times give editorial support to Socialist candidates. Both of course have had a lucrative source of income in commercial, legal, and political advertising inserted by individuals and parties opposed to the socialists.

Although more space in the daily press was devoted in recent decades to news concerning all three parties, and while the socialists could afford to insert some political advertising, the main channels for socialist propaganda were provided by their own publications. Among these is the *Reading Labor Advocate,* a weekly newspaper

[22]A dramatic incident occurred in the city Council Chambers in 1913 when a hundred Socialists were present to witness the "retirement" of a Socialist councilman who had had his pre-signed resignation turned in by the party. As it was being read, the councilman walked forward, took the "resignation," and tore it to pieces, saying he would be governed by his own conscience and that of his constituents. See the *Reading Eagle,* Feb. 1913.

[23]*Reading Eagle,* Nov. 21, 1927.

edited in the interests of the socialist movement since 1911, and owned since 1918 by a cooperative association consisting of socialists and trade unionists. Week after week it has printed, under the able editorial direction of Raymond Hofses, local, state, and national news and announcements of special interest to the socialist and labor movements, and editorials written by local and national party leaders. This publication relied, however, upon a paid circulation, which of necessity limited its field. Another medium used for many years to convey socialist propaganda to all citizens is the *Pioneer* (at one time known as the *Next Step*), a four-page leaflet published by the Socialist party and distributed free to almost all homes throughout the city and county. It is published at irregular intervals throughout the year, with increased frequency before elections; and it is distributed on Sunday mornings by a group of party workers called *The Flying Squadron,* whose thorough organization has made it possible to get vital issues before the entire community on relatively short notice. At times its distribution reached as many as 26,000 of the approximately 28,000 homes within the city, and 53,000 within the city and county. During the past decade the Party has also made use of radio broadcasts over a local station at 12:30 o'clock on Sundays. Propaganda through all of these media have been timed for consumption over week-ends when it would receive leisurely and maximum attention.

Education

It is admittedly difficult to separate "educational" from "propagandist" endeavors. Considered from one angle, a great amount of all socialist activity may be regarded as educational, inasmuch as it increased the political and economic literacy of many persons and acquainted them with facts and issues that are only too frequently avoided as "controversial" in the formal academic or educational world where educators are sometimes unaware of the implied economic, political and social biases of their program. From another viewpoint, much of the activity may be described as propagandist, since it was consciously geared to a specific purpose or goal, with the inevitable tendency to minimize disturbing facts and emphasize those elements of a favorable nature.

Beginning in its earliest years, the Party accumulated a library of books by Marx, Engels, Liebknecht, Morgan, Ward, Lenin, Darwin, Trotsky, London, Sinclair, Spargo, Russell, Hillquit, and others. At one time there were several thousand volumes housed in the Socialist headquarters at the Labor Lyceum, with a wide circulation among party members. In more recent years this circulation has dropped, paralleling a decline in activity among members of the Young People's Socialist League. The latter organization was particularly alive during the early thirties, having at least ten "circles" within the city, with a membership of approximately 300 throughout the city and county. Lectures, study groups, discussions, and participation in the industrial struggles of the period were among its activities. By 1936 the membership of the League had dropped to 30 or 40; and after the party split, when the YPSL was no longer affiliated with the Local Socialist Party, its membership declined even further. While the 1936 Constitution (right-wing) provided for a youth committee to direct the education of persons under 18 on social questions, interest seemed to have declined virtually to the point of extinction. Although the YPSL continued to hold meetings, it was considerably hampered in its work because of the lack of facilities and support from the Reading Socialist party which was no longer affiliated with the national Socialist party.

The Reading Labor College, conducted by the Federated Trades Council in cooperation with the Socialist party, was organized in 1928. On October 9, 1934, the School Board refused the group further use of schoolrooms, but this decision was reversed on October 23 by a five to four vote.[24] Among the courses given in 1934 were, *Principles of Unionism, Social Science, Trade Union Organization Problems,* and *Labor and Government*.[25] It is worth noting that local socialists lent support to the cause of workers' education on an even wider scale. James Maurer was the first president of the Workers' Education Bureau of America, from 1921 to 1929, where he had the opportunity to participate effectively in organizing a workers' educational program under labor leadership.[26]

[24]Lozo, J. P., *op. cit.* pp. 103-105.
[25]*Reading Labor Advocate,* Nov. 2, 1934.
[26]Maurer, J. H., *op. cit., pp.* 308-309, 367-370.

Cooperatives

Apart from a short-lived Labor Exchange Branch organized in 1896 for the barter of goods, and the abortive "cooperative colony" of 1897, mentioned earlier, the first successful cooperative enterprise engaged in by persons associated with the Reading movement was the organization of a cooperative cigar factory in 1898 and incorporated in 1905 with Andrew P. Bower and William C. Hoverter as managers.[27] Many of the early socialists were active in the Cigar-Makers International Union. It is significant that around the turn of the century this particular group of Berks County cigar makers represented the fusion of three types of activity traditionally associated with the socialist movement. They were *trade unionists* (Local 236 of the Cigar-Makers International Union), members of a producer's *cooperative,* and members of the *Socialist party.*

Soon after the organization of the Socialist local, the members were in need of their own headquarters building where they would be free from persecution by militant opponents.[28] They acquired title to a factory building in 1904, remodelled it with voluntary labor supplied by building trades members, and named it the Labor Lyceum, —owned by socialists as members of the *Labor Lyceum Association.* For several years the profits from the cigar factory cooperative were used toward paying off the debt on the Labor Lyceum and paying for the furnishings and repairs.[27] In fact, the cooperative manufactured cigars in the Socialist headquarters building for years, thereby insuring that some Socialist party members would always be on hand for the transaction of business relating to the Party.

In 1918, after the *Reading Labor Advocate* had been edited for a number of years by Charles Maurer, brother of James Maurer, its ownership was acquired by the *Cooperative Publishing Association.* This is the official newspaper of both the Local Socialist party and the Federated Trades Council. In 1920 the *People's* Printing Company was organized as a stock company, with some stock held by socialists. In 1930 the socialists, organized as the *Willow Glen Park Association,* acquired title to a picnic grove situated a few

[27]*Ibid.,* p. 142. *Karl Marx* is one of the brand names on cigars manufactured by this group.
[28]Other tenants in buildings where socialists met delighted in turning off the gas and water, according to James Maurer.

miles from the city. Known as the *Socialist Park,* it has been used for socialist and labor conventions, strike meetings, lectures, picnics, and many other social and recreational activities. It has also provided a source of income for the party campaign chest.

In general, the Reading community has not demonstrated any unusual interest in cooperatives, beyond the establishment of an occasional consumer cooperative. Cooperative ventures of the type launched by the socialists emerged both because that group believed in the principle of cooperation, and because the cooperatives could be utilized as a means for raising funds for the furtherance of the socialist movement. The socialists, as individuals, usually incorporated their enterprises because of legal obstacles to the ownership of property by any political party.

The socialists also organized vocal and instrumental groups which contributed toward the creation of a sense of unity within the group as well as affording publicity to the Party. And in recent years, annual reunions have been held when "old socialists" got together and reminisced about their early struggles.

In the light of the preceding discussion of the varied activities of the socialist party organization, the element of major significance seems to be the extent to which the group functioned not merely as a political party but as a many-sided association which reached out and encompassed within its scope a wide variety of social and economic activities not ordinarily engaged in by the traditionally American political parties. In other words, socialism in Reading had a social structure much broader in scope than its political structure. The crucial importance of this factor is analyzed further in chapter 6.

ACTIVITIES IN MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

The comment is frequently made that although Reading had a socialist government from 1928 to 1931, and from 1936 to 1939, in effect it showed no characteristics to distinguish it from the average city under Republican or Democratic rule. Outwardly, as far as the form and scope of municipal government are concerned, this was essentially true since the legal powers of the municipality are the same as those for other third-class cities in Pennsylvania, as defined by State legislation. The functions performed were not socialistic in the sense of public ownership of utilities (though we shall discuss presently how an important step in this direction was defeated), and under socialist rule, the municipality engaged in few enterprises that competed with private industry. In fact, a comparison with other non-socialist municipal governments in America reveals that some of the latter are further advanced in the field of public ownership than Reading.[29]

On the other hand the socialists gave Reading an administration that was in most respects as good as, if not better than, the city had ever had.. In other words, it performed well those functions which were required of it as defined and limited by the State government. Since most of the years of the first administration coincided with the beginnings of the great business depression, the socialists were unjustly accused of aggravating conditions that were beyond their control. For example, the introduction of mechanized street cleaning equipment was condemned by opposition leaders because it threw men out of work; and the closing or moving away of industrial plants, or the failure of new plants to come in, were all blamed on the socialists on the ground that industrialists were scared away from a city with so radical an administration. Arguments of this type were directed against the socialists in the Fusion campaign of 1931, at a time when industrial shut-downs and unemployment were sweeping the country, particularly in highly industrialized communities. During the 1930's, the city declined slightly in population (0.5 of one percent), though the entire metropolitan district continued to increase (2.9 percent). This static condition was paralleled in many other industrial cities, particularly in the east, over which, as over other far-reaching social and economic changes, the socialists had no particular control.

It is worth noting that socialist control did have an obviously distinctive feature. For the first time, political control was in the hands of a group both representing and supported by the *working classes.*[30] And within the legal framework of Pennsylvania municipalities, the socialist administration probably accomplished as much

[29]U. S. Dept. of Commerce, Census Bureau, *Financial Statistics of Cities, 1935,* Table 11, pp. 90-92.
[30]See Chapters 4 and 5.

as could reasonably be expected in giving especial attention to the interests of the working class; sharply in contrast with administrations more closely allied with other socio-economic groups.

Perhaps the chief issue which precipitated the election of the first socialist administration in 1927 was the controversy over tax assessments. Reading has a large percentage of home owners, and there had been considerable dissatisfaction with the appraisals made by the previous Democratic administration.[31] Soon after the socialists assumed control, a new assessment placed relatively higher values on real estate in the central area, and lower values on small homes away from the center of the city. This, in effect, carried out the socialists' proposal to lower assessed values on small working class homes.[32] The owners of central real estate carried their cases to the court, however, with the result that their valuations were adjusted downward.

Additional accomplishments of the first administration included the erection of a machine shop for repairing city equipment; the abolition of the contract system for garbage collection and street cleaning; street building by the municipal authority; and the establishment of a purchasing department. Socialist leaders contend that these were Socialistic in tendency, though it must be recognized that they, like the other achievements, could have been introduced by an administration not committed to socialist principles. The socialists also provided a new City Hall through the purchase and remodelling of a vacated high school building. As early as 1925, the voters had approved a bond issue authorizing $750,000 for a new city hall, which had not materialized. The purchase of the building from the School District also made funds available to that authority for the building of new structures in more strategic sections of the city.

The Fusion campaign of 1931, when the Republican and Democratic organizations combined and defeated the Socialists, deserves special mention at this time. Elsewhere we shall discuss how the issues of religion, home, and patriotism were repeatedly invoked

[31]Hodges, H. G., *op. cit.*, pp. 283-284.

[32]Reading socialists for years had used this as an issue. *E.g.*, the *Reading Eagle*, on February 18, 1907, quoted J. Henry Stump as saying "the assessments on the homes of working men are higher in proportion than on the homes of wealthy people."

against the socialists; and also various charges of extravagance and inefficiency in the four years of socialist control. But the Fusionists made particular use of the issue of *nepotism,* i.e., that socialist officials gave municipal jobs too freely to their own relatives. Frequent advertisements were inserted in newspapers portraying these relatives on what was described as "The Socialist Family Tree." Most of the facts concerning the employment of relatives were probably true, but it is significant that this should have been made an issue against a Socialist administration of only four years duration. Such a practice had characterized local, county, state, and federal employment for years in those positions not adequately covered by civil service laws, and it certainly had been no exception in local municipal and county offices for generations. While we are aware of the potential inefficiencies of nepotism and certainly intend no defense of it, it seems ironical that in a community where both private and public employers had discriminated against socialists for years, the socialists in public office should have been upbraided by the Fusion opposition for not going out of their way to give employment on a "merit" basis. A practice of this sort by *any* party could be more easily rectified by the introduction of civil service standards than by return to traditional party rule.

During the second Socialist administration (1936-1939) the chief accomplishments were the sponsoring of projects financed largely with federal government funds. These included an airport and administration building, and numerous park and recreational projects. The administration also cooperated with the Housing Authority in making possible modern, low-cost housing for 400 of Reading's low income families. As in the first administration, these projects *could* have been sponsored by non-socialists, but it is to the credit of the Socialists that they *did* sponsor them.

In 1937, the Socialists initiated a project consistent with traditional socialist aims. After authorizing a survey of the local electric power set-up by the engineering firm of Burns and McDonnell, it was estimated that the existing privately-owned power plant could be duplicated for $4,750,000; and a bond issue authorizing the expenditure of this sum by the municipality was presented to the voters at the fall election. In the weeks preceding the election, a bitter campaign was waged against the proposal by a "Citizens' Committee,"

of which a local attorney and State Assemblyman was chairman. Advertisements appeared in the local newspapers signed by groups designated as "Taxpayers and Rent Payers Committee," and "Voluntary Committee on the Bond Issue Question." Arguments included the customary threats of higher taxes, inefficiency of "politicians" in directing such a "complex undertaking," destruction of the credit of the city, and others. In addition, the State Public Utility Commission had ordered a ten percent reduction in rates only a week previously—an argument used to demonstrate that local electricity consumers could rely upon state regulation for reasonable rates. It was not quite clear whether the timing of this reduction during *the* campaign for public ownership was a mere coincidence. The Socialists claimed that the opposition had expended large sums of money for defeat of the proposal. Some such expenditure was certainly made, as evidenced by the obvious cost involved in a series of mimeographed letters sent to all voters and the series of advertisements inserted in newspapers. The source of both the spontaneity and the war chest of any "citizens' committee" is relevant to a true understanding of the nature of the issues involved.

The bond issue was defeated by a vote of about 17,000 to 10,000.[33] In an article appearing the day after the election, the *Reading Eagle*[34] said in part:

> "Proposal suffers crushing defeat . . . was pet project of Mayor J. Henry Stump and his Socialist colleagues in Council . . . opponents of the plan included the Metropolitan Edison Company which took a quiet part in the campaign . . . the Metropolitan Edison Company announced a hands-off policy, but was known to have put on an intensive campaign against the loan in the past several weeks. . . . Albert S. Readinger (Chairman) and his committee (Citizens') insisted they had no connection with the Metropolitan Edison Company."

Elsewhere we have indicated the traditional opposition of Pennsylvania-Germans to public education, a tendency manifested as late as the past decade in the relatively low percentage of persons continuing with schooling after the legal minimum had been attained,[35] despite the fact that the School District had provided adequate and

[33]See Chapter 5 for correlations between this vote and certain variables.
[34]November 3, 1937.
[35]See table XI.

excellent equipment for high school training. It is, therefore, significant to examine the attiude of Socialists toward public education, and their activity as School Directors, since they represented the working classes.

Andrew P. Bower, prominent in socialist, trade-union, and civic affairs for more than fifty years, remarked to the author that he had been unable to secure an adequate education in his youth because of his inability to purchase high-school text-books. With the experience in mind, he had served as early as 1888 on a committee that brought about the distribution of free text-books in the local schools.

The socialists secured their first representation on the School Board with the election of two directors in 1927, and an additional two in 1929. Since it was a nine-member board, with three directors elected biennially for six-year terms, the socialists lacked a majority by one. Three socialist members were again elected in 1935; but the socialists still lacked a majority. The activities of the socialists on this Board are summarized in a recent book on educational and recreational activities in Reading:[36]

> "They (the socialist members) stood for equality of opportunity for all, were heartily in support of education, and at the same time desired an economical administration. More than anything else they stimulated the controlling group to an alertness that challenged their best efforts. The Socialists themselves were strongly in favor of vocational education, opposed any schemes in the schools that touched the pocketbooks of the patrons, except through taxes, and by their very presence restrained types of activities that might have anything of a militaristic nature in them . . . the policies of the Socialists always favored anything of a recreational nature for the children of the working classes."

In connection with socialist educational aims of this type, it is worthwhile to contrast the appeal directed against them in the Fusion campaign of 1931. As previously noted, the socialists had four out of nine members on the Board by 1931, and if one more were elected, they would have had a working majority. The "appalling" possibility of such a contingency's arising was put before the voters by the Fusion committee through the medium of a letter

[36]Lozo, J. P., *op. cit.*, p. 101.

written for the *Fusion Spirit*[37] by a person representing the "Woman's Viewpoint." We quote from this letter:

> ". . . I want to plead with you for one other thing which to me is just as appalling as our Socialist Mayor's desire to install this red-light district.[38] I refer to the pitiful future of our children's character, which would result from Socialist control of the School Board. Do you mothers want your children educated in schools where religion is mocked, either by inference or by direct policy? Do you wish your children trained in an educational system which scorns those principles of patriotism and honest idealism which have made our country the greatest and freest and most progressive in the world? Do you want your children to be taught the Internationale instead of the Star Spangled Banner? Don't forget that when our Socialist city fathers formally opened City Hall, they instructed their orchestra to play the Internationale, their own revolutionary song of class hatred, and not once was the Star Spangled Banner played, until popular indignation forced its rendition on the last of the three days of ceremony? Women of Reading, mothers of Reading, I appeal to you . . ."

In the same issue of the *Fusion Spirit* appeared a plea set up in the form of an advertisement:

SAVE OUR SCHOOLS FROM SOCIALISM

For Truth, Honor, and Patriotism in Our Public Schools

For a Clean Government Representative of All Classes
Your Vote for Fusion Is a Vote for Americanism

SAVE READING FROM RADICALISM

And in another article in the *Fusion Spirit,* the voters are asked to

> ". . . remember the turmoil caused by the following resolution which Mrs. Hoopes (Socialist School Director) presented to the Board shortly after she took office:
>
> 'Be it resolved that for the future it shall be the policy of this Board not only to foster courses and exercises which will advance the cause of peace and international good will, but also that no military demonstrations or exercises are to be held either as a part of or in connection with any school function.' "

[37]This leaflet was published by the Fusion Committee in which the Fusion movement was described as: "Just the voluntary getting together of citizens of two great parties in the municipal election to put into public office good men who will represent the things for which the City of Reading should stand."

[38]The allusion is to a statement by the Socialist chief of police to the effect that a solution for the city's prostitution problem could be a segregated district under municipal control—a practice followed in certain European countries. Such a procedure is designed to *control* rather than to encourage prostitution.

In the resolution alluded to, the socialist member was merely advocating a basic Socialist principle—the substitution of international good will and understanding for nationalistic and chauvinistic views that in the past had led to conflict between nations. It is perhaps needless to point out that the Socialist candidates for School Directors were defeated in a campaign that resulted in the establishment of joint Republican-Democratic rule of the city for the next four years.

It should be noted in passing that even though a working class government may control a municipality, it is at a great disadvantage in its exercise of power until it secures a working majority in more inclusive and higher legislative bodies. An example of this type of disadvantage is afforded by the State laws regulating the appointment of election registrars. Since the enactment of the personal registration law of 1906, registrars from the various political parties had been appointed by the County Commissioners (Democrat controlled) on the basis of the percent of *vote* cast for the party candidates at a previous election. But *no* Socialist had ever been appointed to any of these posts prior to the 1934 Primary election, despite the fact that the Socialist party had been one of the leading political parties in the city since 1910, and the dominant party for almost a decade. On July 5, 1934, the *Reading Eagle* stated that:

> "This will be the first time since the personal registration law that the Socialist party will be recognized. Heretofore that party's requests for representation were ignored."

On July 12, the *Reading Eagle* pointed out that the Commissioners had appointed 55 Democrats, 49 Republicans, and 42 Socialists as registrars for the city's 146 voting districts. Thus, for the first time, Socialists had representation on the registration boards—in a city where Fusion tickets of Republicans and Democrats had been resorted to in recent elections to defeat the Socialists. This somewhat equitable distribution of registrars was of short duration, however,

as the opposition felt the need to do something about it. Consequently, within a year a local Republican State Senator introduced a bill, which, when passed, made previous percent of registration in each party the basis for the apportionment of registrars. Since Socialist registration had always been a fraction of its voting strength,[39] this resulted in 1935 in only 11 of the 146 registrars appointed being Socialists. In this way an unfair, if not illegal, discrimination against Socialists prior to 1934 was legalized through State legislation changing the basis of selection. Thus, after 28 years of *no* representation (1934 excepted), the Socialist party in 1935 found itself with eight percent of the registrars, though the party had polled 45 percent of the vote in 1934, and was to poll 50 percent in the fall election of 1935.

ACTIVITIES IN THE STATE LEGISLATURE

Socialists, in common with other adherents to Marxian philosophy, have visualized the eventual destruction of the capitalistic system and the establishment of a classless, cooperative commonwealth. Socialism of the Reading type has not been concerned with abrupt tactics like "the seizure of power". Rather it has settled its neck into the collar for the long pull in season and out to better the lot of the working man.

In the 1901 platform of the national Socialist party,[40] we find the following:

IMMEDIATE DEMANDS

> "While we declare that the development of economic conditions tends to the overthrow of the capitalist system, we recognize that the time and manner of the transition to socialism also depend upon the stage of development reached by the proletariat. We therefore consider it of the utmost importance for the Socialist party to support all active efforts of the working class to better its condition and to elect Socialists to political offices, in order to facilitate the attainment of this end."

The program then goes on to enumerate such means, including public ownership of utilities; reduction of hours and increase in

[39]See table XX.

[40]Hillquit, M., *History of Socialism in the United States,* Funk and Wagnalls, New York, 1903, pp. 350-351.

wages of labor; accident, unemployment, sickness, and old-age insurance; inauguration of public industries; universal education with government aid for books, clothing, and food; and others.

Short of Federal action, proposals for the attainment of such reforms lie mainly within the province of state legislation. It is significant, therefore, to consider the influence exerted by Reading socialists, elected to the Pennsylvania Assembly, toward the attainment of the aims of the Socialist party.

The "Lone Socialist"

James Maurer was elected in Reading as the only Socialist Representative in the Pennsylvania Legislature in 1910, 1914, and 1916. In a report of his activities,[41] he wrote:

> "In 1910, when I was elected . . . our enemies said my election was an accident and that it would never happen again. Besides, standing alone, there was nothing to fear from me. Our friends said, 'The "Lone Socialist" can accomplish nothing, and we feel sorry for him.' "

Local Republicans in fact tried to have Maurer's election annulled on the ground that he had promised in a campaign speech to contribute one-third of his salary to a local tuberculosis sanitorium, if elected. This was alleged to be a violation of state law directed against the purchase of votes. The legalistic absurdity of the allegation naturally led to withdrawal of the charges.[42]

Since Maurer's term of service in the Legislature coincided with his elevation to the presidency of the Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor, he was in a strategic position to champion social and labor legislation. In his autobiography, he states that during his Assembly career he introduced and fought for a great number of bills and resolutions of which the more important covered workmen's compensation; widows', orphans', old age, and blind pensions; reporting of certain occupational diseases; protection of mine and tunnel workers; one day's rest in seven for employees in certain occupations; insuring legality of organizations for collective action; study of the

[41]*American Labor Year Book, 1916,* Rand School of Social Science, New York, 1916, p. 112.

[42]Maurer, J. H., *op. cit.,* p. 149.

question of legal minimum wages for women and minors; and other social and labor measures.[43]

One of Maurer's first legislative bills provided for the elimination of the Pennsylvania State Constabulary. This organization, established in 1905, was considered a model of its kind, and was opposed by labor on the ground that it was allegedly created for strike-breaking activities. Although the bill was pushed aside, Maurer did aid in the defeat of another bill that would have increased the size of the force.[44]

Maurer writes[45] of an incident in 1913 when organized labor officials meeting in a state convention at Reading chartered a train to the State Capitol and converged in a body on legislative hearings on labor and social measures where they met members of the Manufacturer's Association who had come from their own convention in Philadelphia.

> "The hearing was a long-drawn-out affair with many speakers on each side. Both had women and children as exhibits. The manufacturers brought theirs to tell how happy they were in their jobs and that they neither wanted nor needed laws regulating hours of labor, sanitary working conditions, or anything else; ours told the truth."

The Committee reported favorably on both the child labor and mothers' pension bills, which were later passed by the legislature.

Maurer found, early in his legislative career that bills designed to raise the minimum age for employment met with opposition, not only from employers, but from workers who felt that such legislation would work hardship on widowed families where children were the chief source of support. As a result, he then concentrated more attention on pension legislation for widows, deserted mothers, and dependent children.[46] After four years of continuous effort, a Workmen's Compensation Bill was enacted in 1915, needed legislation that had been blocked for years by reactionary employing interests.

This pioneer work by Maurer in sponsoring and fighting for legislation consistent with both Socialist and organized labor programs was carried on later by other Socialists elected to the State Legislature, which we now consider.

[43] *Ibid.*, pp. 158, 159.
[44] *Ibid.*, pp. 169-170.
[45] *Ibid.*, pp. 151-153.
[46] *Ibid.*, p. 202.

"Two Socialists"

During the severest years of the Depression, two Socialists—Darlington Hoopes, an attorney, and Mrs. Lilith Wilson—represented the Reading Assembly District in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. They were elected three consecutive times—in 1930, 1932, and 1934. Following the socialist line, both were active in the field of social and labor legislation, sponsoring increased appropriations for old-age pensions; ratification of the Federal child labor amendment; a bill that would have required the State to provide sickness, accident, and maternity insurance for all workers; unemployment insurance; a measure prohibiting evictions of the unemployed; minimum wages for women and children; outlawing of company unions; restrictions on industrial home work; public ownership of power, gas, and water works; improvement in the workmen's compensation law, and many others.

Both were very active in local and national Socialist party circles, and in the *Reading Eagle* of August, 1934, they were described as having "earned the respect of old-time politicians as astute parliamentarians." Mrs. Wilson, when elected in 1930, was the first woman Socialist to be named to any legislative body in the United States. Hoopes was recognized by labor forces as the leader of the labor bloc in the House during the 1933 session. At that session, among other things, he led a successful fight for ratification of the Federal child labor amendment. His fight in favor of an unemployment insurance law was not brought to a successful conclusion until the Special Session of December, 1936, when he was no longer a member of the Legislature. In 1935, the newspaper correspondents in the State Capitol at Harrisburg voted him as the ablest Representative in the House.

The unusual record of the Socialist Representatives is indicated by an appraisal of voting in the 1935 Regular Session of the Pennsylvania Legislature which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Black News*[47] of August 30, 1935. This leaflet presented an analysis, pre-

[47] This leaflet doubtlessly derived its name from the Pennsylvania Security League's description of the "black record" of the 1933 and 1935 Sessions. It was pubilshed by the League, Stephen Raushenbush, chairman, for the Unemployed of Pennsylvania, the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor, and the American Federation of Teachers.

pared by the Pennsylvania Security League, of social and labor measures considered in the 1935 session. Among other things, it evaluated the voting record of all members of the House on 28 security measures, and of all members of the Senate on 17 such measures. It is interesting to compare (Table 3) the records of the

TABLE 3

VOTE IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
(28 measures)

Berks County	Right	Wrong	No Help
Hoopes, Socialist	27	0	1
Wilson, Socialist	17[a]	0	0
LaRue, Democrat	20	5	3
Ruth, Democrat	19	6	3
Sarig, Democrat	22	6	0
VOTE IN SENATE (17 measures)			
Norton, Republican	2	10	5

[a]Absent from part of Session due to illness.

Socialist members with those of other Berks County Representatives (Democrats), and with the State Senator (Republican). The vote on each of the measures was designated as either *right, wrong,* or *no help* (due to absence or non-voting) according to standards prepared by the Pennsylvania Security League.

This comparison (given here for what it is worth) reveals the strong pro-labor record of the Socialists; the anti-labor record of the Republican Senator; and the "left-of-center" record of the Democratic Representatives.[48] This picture is consistent with the political activity of their Socialist and non-Socialist colleagues and followers in Reading, as indicated in other portions of our study.

WAR AND PATRIOTISM

Prior to 1914 the socialists throughout the world were united in their opposition to "capitalist and imperialist" wars. While they contended that the class struggle was an unavoidable condition engendered by the conflict of interests between workers and capitalists

[48]The 1933 edition of the Pennsylvania Security League's *Black News* pointed out that Hoopes and Wilson (Soc.), and Ruth (Dem.) had voted "right" on 15 items of social legislation during the 1933 Session.

in all countries, they felt that modern wars between national states were in essence a struggle between capitalist groups competing for economic power; a struggle in which the working classes carried the heaviest burden in the loss of both human and economic resources. According to their reasoning, the working classes in all countries had more in common with each other than with their respective ruling classes, from which it followed that the working class bond should take precedence over nationalistic feelings inasmuch as the latter were inevitably exploited by the ruling classes for the advancement of their own ends.

This position on the nature of modern warfare was subscribed to by American Socialists in the 1901 platform[49] in the following words:

> ". . . the lives of the working class are recklessly sacrificed, wars are fomented between nations, indiscriminate slaughter is encouraged, and the destruction of whole races is sanctioned in order that the capitalists may extend their commercial dominion abroad and enhance their supremacy at home."

Upon the outbreak of World War I in Europe in August, 1914, the Socialist parties in the belligerent countries retreated from their anti-war position.[50] The American Socialist party adhered to the anti-war policy both before and after the war declaration by the United States, although a number of prominent members capitulated and supported the war effort.[51] Among those who did not compromise the Socialist position were Debs, Hillquit, and Maurer.

An examination of Maurer's activities during those World War years reveals that, in addition to his work as a labor leader and Socialist legislator, he devoted considerable time to the cause of keeping the United States out of the European War. Early in 1915, and again in 1916, the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor, of which Maurer was president, had appealed to Samuel Gompers to hold an anti-war congress of all branches of organized labor because of the fear that extension of credits to the belligerent powers would involve the United States on the side which was greatest in debt.[52] In

[49]Hillquit, M., *op. cit.,* p. 350.
[50]Hillquit, M., *Loose Leaves from a Busy Life,* Macmillan, New York, 1934, p. 145.
[51]Hillquit, M., *ibid.,* p. 159-169; and Maurer, J. H., *op. cit.,* p. 221-222. Maurer is bitter in his denunciation of "many of the so-called intellectuals" writing that "They deserted when it took courage to remain true to their con-

August, 1915, he called on President Wilson to warn him of the danger of economic interests stampeding the United States into a a war with Mexico.[52] Soon thereafter, the Socialist party proposed, as a method of enforcing its peace program, that "the President of the United States convoke a congress of neutral nations, which shall offer mediation to the belligerents and remain in permanent session until the termination of the war." The Party appointed a committee consisting of Morris Hillquit, Meyer London, and James Maurer to urge the plan upon the President, which was done in a visit to the White House, January, 1916.[53] At the end of May, 1917, Maurer was one of the speakers at the organization meeting of the "People's Council of America for Democracy and Peace" in Madison Square Garden, New York, and later he made a speaking tour across the continent in its behalf.[54]

Inasmuch as Maurer was the undisputed leader of the Reading Socialists, his uncompromising position on the war question doubtless influenced the extent to which local Socialists were charged with sedition and un-Americanism, both during and immediately following the war. The city council election of November, 1917, provided an opportune battleground for these issues. Four candidates representing the "American" Party ran against four Socialists. The final vote was approximately two to one in favor of the "American" candidates. Following are a few excerpts from an article in the *Reading Eagle* on the day following the election, describing the Socialist defeat as a victory for Americanism:

AMERICAN TICKET ROUTS SOCIALISM
Reading Proves Loyalty to the Flag
Victory Over Two to One

". . . Today the prophecies that Reading would turn down the American Party and elect an anti-government administration are totally discredited by the crushing and overwhelming verdict of the voters . . . the results, as a free expression of Americanism, undiluted, have proved Reading is an American City, in the first rank among patriotic communities in the United States. Reading has repudiated Socialism, its doctrines and its standard bearers, and the preachment that the red banner goes before 'the grand old flag' is given a blow that will tell for Americanism throughout the nation. . . ."

The defeat, however, was not as overwhelming as the Eagle article portrayed it. In the first place, the Socialists had secured the second largest number of votes at the earlier Primary election. The highest number of votes at this election would have assured them a place on the ballot at the general election, inasmuch as the city at that time was still functioning under a Non-Partisan law governing local elections. Second, until 1927, the Socialists rarely secured more than one-third[55] of the total vote in any election. The two-to-one defeat at this time was, in fact, a coalition victory against the Socialists in which the total opposition vote was no greater than usual. For these reasons, the recurring prediction that the Socialist party was "on the wane," and the glowing description of a victory for "Americanism" was not substantiated. The local Socialists had lost little, if any, ground in the face of a concerted attempt to discredit their patriotism. On the war issue, the Socialists were differentiated from others not by their lack of "Americanism" as much as by their awareness of the wastefulness of modern warfare as a means for achieving desired ends.

The virus of red-baiting that infected the country in the years immediately following World War I made its presence felt in Reading. Slightly more than a year after the Armistice, the Socialists had arranged an amnesty meeting. This was to be held in their own Labor Lyceum because the city would not license any of the large public halls for the occasion. On the day of the meeting, November 23, 1919, socialist opponents called a patriotic rally which resulted in a demonstration of mass hysteria. Thousands of persons milled around the Labor Lyceum, and only the Socialists' prompt cancellation of the meeting averted a riot and possible bloodshed.[56]

Despite the fact that the majority of adherents to all political parties in the city have identical cultural and ethnic roots—though

victions and to the people who looked to them for leadership. Some people apparently, can change their convictions as easily as they can a shirt, if they have another shirt."

[52]Maurer, J. H., *op. cit.*, pp. 210-212.
[53]Hillquit, M., *op. cit.*, p. 161.
[54]Maurer, J. H., *op. cit.*, p. 223.

[55]See table XIII.
[56]Maurer, J. H., *op. cit.*, pp. 262-265.

a divergent class composition—non-socialist leaders have repeatedly sought to identify their opponents with an un-American point of view. In the campaign of 1931, the Fusionists made capital of the recent creation of a National Government in England, and inserted full page advertisements[57] containing statements of which the following are typical:

ENGLAND HAS LEARNED THE FOLLY OF TAKING A CHANCE

"A few years ago when all seemed well and a world-wide depression had not yet set in, the British people took a chance. Listened to the rosy theories and promises of Socialism, they voted into power the Socialist-controlled Labor Party.

"But when a crisis approached—when the prosperity and the future of England were at stake—then days of 'taking a chance' were over. English men and women learned that theories were neither food nor shelter; that rosy promises could not sustain England's standing among the nations. And with a landslide vote that amazed observers, they have now repudiated Socialism, and the Socialist-controlled Labor Party.

"Reading voters, too, have taken their chance, in a time of great prosperity. And Reading voters now face their crisis. Rosy theories and promises are no more nourishing here than in England."

This theme of "Americanism" appeared again in the 1935 campaign, when an advertisement[58] in praise of the service rendered to country, community, church, and school by local Republicans stated:

"They are fighting a battle for American principles, a battle for that liberty for which our forefathers also fought, a battle against creeds and isms from other lands, that are not American."

In the same campaign, the Minute Men of Berks County—who unfortunately for this study did not identify themselves by name—inserted a series of advertisements of which the following was typical:[59]

[57] *Reading Times*, October 29, 1931.
[58] *Reading Eagle*, Oct. 24, 1935.
[59] *Reading Times*, Oct. 30, 1935.

— TO ALL —
Patriotic Men and Women in Berks County
We Make This Appeal:

"The men who are responsible for the success of the unbossed Republican candidates would like every man, woman, and child in Berks County to set aside Sunday, November 3, as Rededication Day.

"On this day in the quiet of your homes, or while worshipping in your church, we believe that it would be wise to stop a minute and reflect on the appreciation you owe to your God and your Country.

"LIBERTY is as much at stake today as it was in 1776, and unless all those who love their schools, their churches, and their flag arouse themselves from their indifference, an insidious force that is slowly throttling our very economic life in Berks County will destroy us all. In 1776, the MINUTE MEN arose to meet the need of their COUNTRY. It is just as important that the MINUTE MEN of 1935 show as much fervor and love for their GOD, their COUNTRY, and their FLAG."

In the 1939 campaign when the Socialists were up for re-election, the Republicans hurled at them every conceivable accusation, designed to convince the electorate that Reading would be threatened with all sorts of danger, comparable to those which had befallen European peoples, if the local Socialists were returned to office. The following excerpts are taken from a newspaper advertisement[60] inserted by the Republican campaign committee:

HITLER ..... was a Socialist
MUSSOLINI .... was a Socialist
STALIN ..... was a Socialist

"The dictators of the 'ISM' countries all started out as Socialists. They promised the people of their countries great and glowing benefits. Just like our Reading Socialists, they preached the fallacy of government ownership and (sic) industry . . . of production for use instead of for profit . . . of government handouts to everyone, and babbled about the wonders that were to come from their new system. . . .

"Socialism is a fallacious ideal that never works out in practice. . . .

"Our local Socialist leaders must laugh up their sleeves at the ease with which they have hoodwinked Reading people for such a long time. . . .

[60] *Reading Eagle*, Nov. 3, 1939.

"Do we want a Hitler or a Mussolini in City Hall? Do we desire a handle-bar mustachioed Stalin regimenting all of us? Do we want a Red Flag to replace Old Glory at City Hall? . . .

"In short, do we want to support persons who advocate an 'ism' that is against the U. S. Constitution and against our own best interests?"

A revealing incident occurred in the Spring of 1937, indicative of the local Party's principle of consistently de-emphasizing anything of a militaristic nature. The late Lieutenant General Hunter Liggett, a World War officer, had been born in Reading. Sometime after his death in December, 1935, the Army and Navy Club of San Francisco had offered a bronze plaque to the City of Reading in memory of the Commander of the First American Army in the Meuse-Argonne campaign. In a letter to the San Francisco organization, Mayor J. Henry Stump stated: "I have communicated your generous offer to the majority Socialist members of our City Council, and they have asked that I express their regrets in being unable to accept the same, as they feel that monuments, plaques, etc., of this type tend to glorify war and perpetuate the spirit of militarism."[61]

In presenting these data on the anti-militaristic position of the Reading Socialists, we have not sought to convey the impression that either the city's population or the Pennsylvania-Germans have been unpatriotic at any time. An examination of historical sources reveals that Reading has always contributed its share of man-power and other resources in all of the wars engaged in since it was founded. In fact, flag-raisings, parades, patriotic rallies, and the celebration of national holidays have always received enthusiastic approval. Hence, the continued support given to the socialist group which professed anti-militarism as one of its principles seems contradictory in the light of the dominant folkways of the community. A possible explanation of this paradox might be found in the ability of the individual to combine patriotism, in the sense of caring for one's country and being willing to defend it in an emergency, with the recognition of the social dis-utility of modern warfare, and the goal of eventually abolishing it.

After the outbreak of World War II in Europe, but prior to the entrance of the United States in December, 1941, the local Socialist

[61] *New York Herald Tribune,* May 18, 1937.

party had not taken any definite position concerning the conflict.[62] This attitude may have been influenced to some extent by the respective positions of the Socialist party of the United States and of the Social Democratic Federation after the split in 1936. The former group (left-wing), led by Norman Thomas, adhered to a non-interventionist position, whereas the latter group (right-wing), with which the Reading Socialist party was affiliated, favored intervention—interpreting the world-wide conflict as a "Battle of the Totalitarians against the Democracies."[63]

CHURCH AND FAMILY

In addition to the accusations of un-Americanism, the Socialists were attacked repeatedly as destroyers of religion and the home, and corrupters of youth. On October 14, 1911, in answer to charges of irreligion, the *Reading Labor Advocate* in an editorial addressed to Socialist opponents, said:

"Your class can see the handwriting on the wall, and are using that old, moss-covered trick, religion, to get the poor, deluded wage-slaves quarrelling over it."

This brought a reply in the form of an advertisement[64] which concluded with this challenge:

"Do you wish by your vote to indorse the sentiment that religion, the religion of your mothers, the religion of the saints and martyrs, is nothing but an 'old, moss-covered, trick'?"

On November 2, 1931, the *Reading Eagle* printed a sermon against Socialism delivered in one of the leading Protestant churches of the city. It concluded with the following observation:

"It is the hypocrisy in their program that will deceive anybody but the heedful and intelligent. The average citizen of Reading doesn't know what the Socialists want to do with American institutions and religion. If they saw through their nice manners they would be amazed to find that all this good citi-

[62] Interview with J. Henry Stump.

[63] Interview, July 1941, with David H. H. Felix, vice-chairman of the Socialist Party, U. S. A.; and correspondence, July, 1941, with August Claessens, Acting National Secretary, Social Democratic Federation.

[64] *Reading Eagle,* Oct. 21, 1911.

zenship was only a mask, a method of working within the law for the sinister purpose of destroying our institutions. . . ."

On October 28, the Republicans ran an advertisement in the *Eagle* which quoted this same Protestant clergyman as follows:

NOT "SUDDEN DEATH" BUT GRADUAL DESTRUCTION OF SCHOOL—CHURCH—HOME UNDER SOCIALISTIC COMMUNISTIC RULE

"The largest, the best organized and the most insidious foe of religion is Socialism.

"In America the leaders of Socialism conceal or deny the anti-religious nature of their creed. . . .

"There are enough Christians, at least enough church members, in Reading to overwhelm the enemy. They must be summoned and tested. That challenge should be formed from every pulpit. No Christian should be allowed to escape that test. No Christian worthy of the name would wish to escape it."

A few days later, on October 31, 1935, the Socialists issued the following challenge in their official publication, *The Pioneer*:

"Socialist Church-goers, Attention! We know there are thousands of Socialist party members and sympathizers who are members of churches—embracing every religious faith. We ask all of you to GO TO CHURCH NEXT SUNDAY to HEAR CAREFULLY and REPORT ACCURATELY any reference which your pastor may make to the present local political situation. We learn that the industrial dictators of the community are attempting to drive the clergymen of Reading into a concerted attack against Socialists. . . . If your pastor uses his pulpit as a Democratic-Republican forum, please report his statement . . . to the *Reading Labor Advocate*."

Year in and year out the Socialists were accused of seeking to undermine every fundamental social institution in the community.[65] As early as 1911 the Socialist candidate for mayor felt the necessity of issuing a statement to the effect that the Socialists were in fact seeking to preserve the family and the school by abolishing the employment of children in factories.[66] As for the church, many Socialists were members while others were probably indifferent rather

[65]See campaign literature collected in Benjamin Fryer's *Berks County Political Scrapbooks* (unpublished).

[66]*Reading Eagle*, Oct. 10, 1911.

than hostile to organized religion. Very few Protestant clergymen openly opposed the Socialists, and a few were openly in agreement with the aims of the movement. With respect to the Roman Catholic Church—a traditional opponent of socialism—a member of the local Catholic clergy confided to the author that there was no conflict between the Socialist party and Roman Catholicism in Reading because "the local Socialists do not believe in the fundamental principles of socialism!"[67] Whether the reason given was correct or not, the evidence would seem to indicate that the *real* conflict between socialists and non-socialists involved interests of a more fundamental class nature. Consistent with socialist opposition generally, appeals made for the preservation of family, church, and school were frequently rationalizations concealing a more basic conflict issue. These socio-economic class aspects of the Reading Socialist movement are considered in the following chapters.

SUMMARY

The Reading Socialists adhered in principle to the basic program of the national Socialist party established in 1901, though their achievements while in control of the municipal government went little beyond giving the city an efficient and honest administration. As a minority representation on the School Board they constantly advocated progressive measures designed to improve the type of education given to the working classes. In the State Legislature they were always in the forefront in advocating, and frequently following through to a successful conclusion, social and labor legislation designed to improve the condition of the working classes. They lent wholehearted support to the Presidential candidates of the Socialist party—support that was modified, however, after the Party split in 1936. Many of the local leaders were active in the state and national councils of the Party. As a local Party organization, they developed and trained a disciplined leadership group that carried on an unceasing propaganda campaign to keep the principles and aims of socialism before the mass of voters. At least part of the success of the movement could be attributed to the wide ramifications of

[67]Interview, April, 1941.

their activities throughout the social structure of the community; activities that went beyond those customarily engaged in by a political party. Their leaders were also very active in the local and state councils of organized labor—an identity of interest that was more complete with respect to craft unions than industrial unions. Although the non-socialist opposition consistently charged them with trying to undermine all of the basic social institutions of the community, the primary aim of the socialists, in principle and practice, was the advancement of working class interests by Socialist party and trades union means.

Chapter 4

CLASS vs. CLASS

> "The Socialist Party exists to obtain political power for the working class to the end that our social system may be so changed that the benefits of a full life which are now reserved for a privileged few can be employed by the masses of the people. . . . '

This succinct statement of class aims appeared in 1932 in the official propaganda leaflet[1] of the local Socialist party. In principle, it may be regarded as a generalized exposition of the class goal of all socialist groups that stem from Karl Marx, though these groups differ widely with respect to the appropriate means for achieving their ends. These means range from evolutionary to revolutionary approaches; from democratic to dictatorial tactics; from projected change in the sphere of economic institutions to modification of *all* social institutions.

The mere statement of this working class aim could be as devoid of reality, however, as the contention that the traditional political parties functioned in the interest of *all* groups, regardless of class. Hence, one of our chief tasks in this study is to determine, as objectively as possible within the limits of our data, the road which the socialists in Reading travelled in the direction of achieving this goal. Did their appeal receive an overwhelming response from the working classes? Or did it succeed merely in drawing voting support from persons representing all classes who were dissastisfied with particular groups of Republican or Democratic politicians? It is one thing to know that socialist ideology makes its appeal on a class basis, but another thing to determine whether the support for the party comes from members of the classes to which the challenge is directed.

From time to time we are confronted with the point of view that the United States has been, or is, a relatively classless society. During the period of colonization and subsequent expansion of the United States, there was a considerable degree of equality of opportunity

[1] *Pioneer,* May, 1932, p. 3.

among immigrants from countries where rigid systems of stratification prevailed. However, as American culture developed, a variety of factors led to the development of preferential positions for certain individuals or families. This led to the establishment of a caste society in the sphere of Negro-White and Oriental-White relations and the development of a mobile class system within each of the chief racial groups. Today there is scarcely an American community without its class hierarchy though differences exist in different localities as regards the openness of the upper classes. Evidence of the reality of these class differences is found both in objective and subjective criteria. The former include factors such as wealth, occupation, religion, race, length of residence, and family connections. The latter include attitudes of superordination or subordination toward members of other social classes, attitudes which need not be reciprocated. Thus if a firmly entrenched member of a higher class considers another individual to be in a lower class, and if that attitude is shared by other members of the higher class, the subordinated member occupies an inferior social position in the class hierarchy, regardless of his own feelings in the matter. Only when he accumulates sufficient tangible criteria, and succeeds in evoking an attitude of acceptance from the higher group—over a decently elapsed period of time—is he apt to change his position. Thus, while individuals may belong to functionally, i.e., objectively, inter-related segments of the community—typified in the diverse occupational, economic, religious, and racial groups—they still may be divided with respect to their social status; a fact which establishes the sociological reality of the class structure.[2]

[2]A vast literature reflecting an awareness of social stratification and class conflict has appeared in America. The earlier group of American sociologists recognized the existence of social classes in American culture, and incorporated them in their general, conceptual framework. See, e.g., Charles H. Page, *Class and American Sociology: From Ward to Ross,* The Dial Press, New York, 1940. Later sociologists, influenced by the trend toward specific monographic studies, have made noteworthy contributions to the understanding of social classes through the medium of intensive, analytical studies. See, e.g., John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town,* Yale University Press, New Haven, 1937; Helen and Robert Lynd, *Middletown in Transition,* Harcourt, Brace and Co., New York, 1937; Elin L. Anderson, *We Americans: A Study of Cleavage in an American City,* Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1937; W. Lloyd Warner and Paul S. Lunt, *The Social Life of a Modern Community,* Yale University Press, New Haven, 1941; Harvey W. Zorbaugh, *The Gold Coast and the Slum,* University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1929; Alfred W. Jones, *Life, Liberty,*

The present study includes within its scope the demonstration of the class nature of a socialist movement in a city whose population numbered 111,000 persons in 1930. Our focus of interest is not the class structure *per se* in Reading, but rather the relationship between the socialist movement and the socio-economic classes which favored or opposed it. The racial and cultural homogeneity of the population provides a setting for analyzing the class factor in relative isolation from the usual diverse nationality, religious, and racial elements which complicate studies of this type in other American industrial centers. The importance of this type of situation for the analysis of class attitudes is recognized by Kornhauser[3] in his statement:

> "Economic classes can hardly be subjectively homogeneous when each broad income or occupational division of the population includes men of diverse race, religion, national origin, regional, and community interests—with each of these ties exercising a significant, even if secondary, hold upon the individual's purposes and upon his beliefs concerning appropriate means for fulfilling these purposes."

In the present chapter we shall examine the class nature of the socialist movement with respect to (1) the *occupational* characteristics of both the socialist and non-socialist political leadership; (2) the sources of *financial support* of the socialist and opposition groups; and (3) the *class participation* of the socialists in labor organization and industrial conflict. In chapter 5 we shall present evidence of the class nature of *voting support* given to both socialist and non-socialist candidates, comparing it with similar data from other socialist cities. The class nature of the movement is implicit in the discussion of such factors as ideology, party organization, municipal and State legislative activities, the close tie-up with labor organization, and counter-propaganda, in chapters 2 and 3. But it is our contention that the additional types of evidence introduced in this

and Property, Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1941. For additional insights, also see Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class,* Macmillan, New York, 1899; Lewis Corey, *The Crisis of the Middle Class,* Covici Friede, New York, 1935; novels by Edward Bellamy, Upton Sinclair, John Dos Passos, and John Marquand; and books, pamphlets, and articles by various Marxian writers.

[3]Kornhauser, Arthur W., "Analysis of 'Class' Structure of Contemporary American Society", in *Industrial Conflict: A Psychological Interpretation,* Yearbook of the Society for Psychological Study of Social Issues, The Cordon Co., New York, 1939, p. 247.

chapter and chapter 5, when considered in *totality,* point to the inescapable conclusion that the Reading socialist movement did precipitate social thought and action along class lines. Separately, each of the types of evidence would not necessarily be indicative of a class movement.[4]

WORKING-CLASS LEADERSHIP

The nature of the working class leadership of the Socialist party is seen in sharper perspective if we examine the occupational composition of its candidates for political office and compare it with that of the opposition parties. For this purpose, we selected approximately 100 representative candidates from the three parties who had been nominated for city-wide, county, state, or congressional offices from 1910 to 1935.[5] These thirty-odd candidates of each party probably represent a reasonable cross-section because there is considerable overlapping of candidates within each party in successive election years.[6] Quite a few candidates run for office many times, as

[4]For example: The election of a worker to political office does not imply that he represents his class in office. He may have been selected as a candidate by the propertied class merely to secure the "labor" vote.

The sponsorship of labor legislation does not imply that the legislator thinks in class terms. Such legislation may be encouraged by the upper classes as a concession to preserve the status quo.

The election of a Socialist candidate does not imply selection by voters on a class basis. Electors of all socio-economic strata may support him in order to displace a corrupt or inefficient office-holder.

Proletarian or working-class origin of an individual does not imply that he continues to think in terms of his class when in office. Witness the respective roles of Alfred E. Smith and Franklin D. Roosevelt. Smith, of unquestioned lower class origin, became identified with upper class interests which reached its fruition in his "Liberty League" affiliation in 1936, whereas Roosevelt, of unquestioned upper class origin, incurred the enmity of his class by sponsoring progressive social and labor measures.

However, if members of the lower economic and occupational groups form a political party; are elected to office by voters in these groups; are regarded as "class" representatives by the opposition; and continue to represent their class after election to office—sponsoring legislation in its behalf—the evidence in *totality* indicates a class movement.

[5]City-wide offices include those of mayor, councilman, controller, treasurer, or school-director; county offices, those of commissioner, controller, judge, prothonotary, or prison-inspector; state offices, those of senator or representative; and congressional, that of Representative in the U. S. Congress.

[6]The cross-section includes 100 *different persons,* and not merely 100 candidates for different offices. Thus James Maurer, who was the Socialist candidate for state legislator in 1910, for city councilman in 1927, and for U. S. vice-president in 1928, is counted only *once* in the occupational distribution. This

for example, Socialist party leaders, who were nominated year after year for a wide variety of municipal, county, state, and federal offices.

In order to facilitate our occupational comparison, we have classified the candidates' occupations according to the socio-economic categories used by Edwards.[7] Distributing these occupations is a difficult task because of changes that occur over a span of years. For example, a candidate may have been a cigar-maker (semi-skilled); then have been elected to office, during which time he abandoned his original trade; then he may take a position as a salesman (clerical), or may open a mercantile establishment (proprietary) after his tenure of office. This would provide three different alternatives for classification in Edwards' hierarchy. Hence, for the purpose of introducing some degree of uniformity in our classification, we have taken the *usual* occupation of the candidate prior to running for office, in order to give some indication of the typical occupational origin of candidates in all parties.[8] Among the Socialists, the recurrent occupations are those of cigar-maker, carpenter, tinsmith, molder, machinist, steam-fitter, piano-tuner, foreman, pattern-maker, plumber, knitter, fireman, and barber; among the Republicans, insurance agent, manager, contractor, superintendent, merchant, manufacturer, lawyer, architect, minister, teacher, and engineer; among the Democrats, manager, contractor, insurance agent, feed and grain dealer, restaurant proprietor, hotel-keeper, merchant, farmer, lawyer, teacher, physician, and dentist. Arranging the entire sample for each party according to Edwards' categories (Table 4) we find that 85 percent of the Socialist candidates were drawn from the skilled, or semiskilled, or unskilled worker groups, whereas an approximately equal proportion of Democratic candidates and a greater proportion of Republican candidates were drawn from the professional, proprietary, managerial, or clerical groups.

Because of our selection of a sample of candidates in each party, it is possible that this occupational distribution is not absolutely accurate in all details. It does, however, suggest a general tendency

procedure eliminates the possibility of one person's occupation being counted a multiple number of times.

[7]See chapter 1; also table VI.

[8]In a few instances where the candidate, after running for office, shifted to a new permanent occupation, the latter is used in the occupational classification.

in the selection of candidates—indicating the *typical* categories in which we could expect to find a Socialist, Republican, or Democratic candidate. Thus, during the years 1910 to 1935, half of all Socialist candidates had been engaged in some skilled trade, and a fourth in some semiskilled occupation. A few of the Socialist candidates were in the professional class, including a lawyer, who assumed an active role in the local party after taking up residence in the city in 1926, and an editor, who took over the direction of the party's weekly newspaper after having followed occupations of a clerical nature. While it is known that certain teachers, ministers, and other professional persons sympathized with the Socialists' aims, they were not openly active[9] in the party and were not nominated for public office. Although the socialist sample disclosed few candidates in the proprietary and managerial category, a number of Socialists were engaged in small businesses, particularly during the '20s and '30s, though they did not aggregate a sufficient number materially to affect the over-all occupational distribution. While some of the Socialist candidates did abandon their original skilled or semiskilled occupations to devote their full time to party activities or public office, it is significant that the socialist leadership was overwhelmingly recruited from persons who originally followed those occupations.

Both Republican and Democratic candidates were drawn chiefly from the proprietary and managerial class, with the professional class contributing the next highest proportion. The professional class in these parties is weighted heavily with lawyers, many of whom seek offices requiring a legal training. Since only one lawyer was openly active in the Socialist party, that group was frequently embarrassed in nominating candidates for offices which required a legal training. In one election, when the Socialist lawyer was seeking a judgeship, the socialists nominated a man without legal training for the office of district attorney. He failed of election, however, because the district attorneyship is a county-wide office, and the Socialists rarely succeeded in electing candidates on a county-wide basis, their city pluralities being offset by the rural Democratic vote.

[9]See chapter 6 for an interpretation of this inactivity. An exception, however, was a young minister who was affiliated for several years with the Socialist group but later became active in the small Communist group in the city; in the meantime abandoning his church work.

It is noteworthy that an overwhelming proportion of the Socialist candidates represented the "aristocracy" of the working classes; i.e., the skilled worker group. The representation, in fact, was disproportionate, since more than half of the candidates came from this class of workers, whereas skilled workers constituted merely 16 percent of all persons gainfully occupied in the city in 1930. This suggests another problem evidenced by the popular statement to the effect that the Reading socialist movement is really a "middle-class" phenomenon. Is it possible for this movement to be both "middle-class" and working class at one and the same time? Attempting an answer to this question requires a more precise understanding of what is meant by "middle-class". The Lynds[10] did not include

TABLE 4

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIALIST, REPUBLICAN, AND DEMOCRATIC CANDIDATES, BY OCCUPATIONS, COMPARED WITH OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL POPULATION, READING

	Total[a] Population	Party Candidates Socialist (33)	Republican (36)	Democrat (30)
ALL OCCUPATIONS (Percent)	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1. Professional	5.	6.	28.	30.
2. Proprietors, Managers, and Officials (including Farmers)[b]	6.	3.	45.	53.
3. Clerks and Kindred Workers	16.	6.	11.	17.
4. Skilled Workers[c]	16.	55.	17.	0.
5. Semiskilled Workers	35.	27.	0.	0.
6. Unskilled Workers	22.	3.	0.	0.
TOTAL: Professional, Proprietary, and Clerical	27.	15.	84.	100.
TOTAL: Skilled, Semiskilled, and Unskilled	73.	85.	17.	0.

[a]See table VI.

[b]Farmers constituted one-third of the Democratic candidates in the proprietary-managerial class. This seems logical since the Democratic party is dominant in the rural portions of the county. Only one of the Republican candidates was a farmer. In both of these parties, some of the proprietary-managerial candidates were rural businessmen, however.

[c]Since the Republican party was stronger in the city than in the rural areas, its lack of farmer candidates was compensated for by a larger percentage of skilled worker candidates. It is quite probable that the Democratic party also nominated some skilled worker candidates from time to time, though none were evident in this sample. In either case, skilled worker candidates never assumed any positions of leadership comparable to that found in the Socialist party, where they played the dominant role.

[10]*Middletown in Transition*, p. 459.

skilled workers in the "middle-class", placing them in a category beneath the middle-class groups, but above the semiskilled and unskilled worker groups. Corey[11] likewise excluded all wage-workers from his "middle-class". On the other hand, Warner and Lunt[12] in their six-fold classification of Yankee City's social hierarchy discovered some skilled workers in the "upper-middle" class; a considerable proportion in the "lower-middle" class; and the remainder in the two lower classes. They point out that while there is a high correlation between type of occupation and class position, nevertheless, there is considerable overlapping of occupational groups among the six classes. With respect to Reading, it would seem, in the light of the ethnic homogeneity of the community, that a considerable proportion of skilled and even semiskilled workers could as reasonably be included in the "middle-class" as are many of the small proprietors and clerical workers. There would seem to be some justification for referring to these skilled workers as "lower middle-class" even though there has been a tendency in the past to lump all wage-workers into a "working-class", subdivided according to the degree of skill possessed by the worker. This does not mean, however, that we should describe Reading socialism as a "middle-class" movement, because such a designation would connote that its leadership included considerable representation from the diverse professional, business, and clerical elements that form the back-bone of the "middle-class" in American life. Since this is not the case, it seems more accurate to designate the movement as working-class, recognizing that unskilled worker representation is virtually nil (as is the case in all parties) and that some of the skilled working element might very well be sociologically described as "lower-middle". At least from the standpoint of occupational analysis of party candidates, the Socialists represented the skilled and semiskilled working classes as conclusively as the Republican and Democratic leadership was drawn from the professional and proprietary classes.

[11] *Crisis of the Middle Class*, pp. 273-275.
[12] *The Social Life of a Modern Community*, pp. 261-262.

SOURCES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Three of the bitterest fights for political control were waged in the municipal campaigns of 1931, when the Democrats and Republicans formed a coalition to oust the Socialists from office; of 1935, when the inability to form an opposition coalition paved the way for the Socialists' return to office; and of 1939, when the weakened Socialist party could not muster sufficient voting power to defeat the Democratic candidates. The heavy financial contributions from local industrial and mercantile interests to the Socialist opposition groups in these successive campaigns were indicative of the class nature of political activity in which the socialists served as the nucleus for the working classes, and the Republicans formed the spearhead of the professional-proprietary class opposition. This trend was consistent with the increasing tempo of class *voting endorsement*, analyzed in chapter 5.

In 1931 the leaders of both Republican and Democratic groups, together with economically powerful interests, became panicky over the prospect of *another* four years of socialist rule. The socialists had polled 50 percent of the total vote in 1927, with the obvious implication that in the future any opposition would have to present a united front to defeat them. The Fusion campaign of 1931 followed, in which the Republicans and Democrats pooled their resources and reported expenditures of $11,931 to defeat the Socialist administration. An examination of the source of this financial support[13] reveals a considerable number of contributions of $100 or more from local industrialists, lawyers, and politicians.

Contributions to the Republican campaign of 1933 revealed more clearly the class alignments of the socialist opposition. Only that year, the community had experienced one of its greatest strikes in the hosiery and allied industries, with the result that the powerful employing interests did not want their problems aggravated by having Socialists elected to office. Among the chief financial backers of the socialist opposition were a hosiery manufacturer, who contributed $2,200, and two of the leading members of the Wyomissing industries group, each of whom contributed $1,700.[14]

[13] *Reading Eagle*, Nov. 4, 1931.
[14] *Reading Eagle*, Dec. 4, 1933.

The Primary election campaign of September, 1935, provided an excellent illustration of the extent to which local industrial interests would underwrite a non-socialist candidate in order to insure his election. Prior to the Primary election, the Socialists, in caucus, had nominated Darlington Hoopes, lawyer and Socialist Assemblyman, for the office of President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. This meant automatic endorsement by the Socialists at the Primaries, with the assurance that he would be the Socialist candidate at the Fall general election. Hence the opposition felt it imperative to see that the present incumbent in that office should be nominated by *both* Republican and Democratic groups at the Primary election, in order that the opposition to the Socialists would not be divided at the general election. Experience in the 1931 campaign had demonstrated that no candidates in opposition to the Socialists could feel confident of election unless they commanded united non-socialist support. Because of this threat of a Socialist being elected to an important judicial post, the Primary campaign to secure both opposition party endorsements for Judge Paul N. Schaeffer received heavy financial support from the Wyomissing Industries group, whose members had interlocking industrial, banking, and real estate connections; from other textile manufacturers; from iron and steel and other industrialists; and from many members of the legal profession. These contributions are listed in detail in an issue of the *Pioneer*[15]—Socialist party campaign leaflet—which summarized this financial support as coming from "(1) the hosiery manufacturers of Wyomissing, (2) the labor exploiting steel interests, (3) the profiteering public utility magnates, (4) the real estate corporations, (5) the banks which are controlled by all these interests, and (6) a group of lawyers". Although the Socialist candidate for Judge was defeated in the fall election, the Socialists scored their most decisive victory by electing the entire city administration, and capturing several county offices—partially because the Republicans and Democrats failed to nominate a Fusion ticket for municipal offices. Among the $7,000 listed as contributions[16] to the Republican campaign in the general election, was a contribution of $500 from one of the partners in the

[15]Oct. 15, 1935.
[16]*Reading Eagle,* Dec. 5, 1935.

Wyomissing Industries group, in addition to the usual contributions from professional-proprietary sources.

For the Republican campaign of 1939, the treasurer of the party's finance committee listed expenditures of $11,069. Of this amount, $3,645, or one-third, was contributed by individuals directly or indirectly affiliated with the Wyomissing Industries group; with other substantial contributions coming from leading industrialists, businessmen, and lawyers within the city.[17] While the factories of the Wyomissing Industries are located outside the city proper, they represent the greatest single manufacturing group within the metropolitan district, and exercise a dominant role in the economic life of the entire community. Hence it seemed inevitable that their political interests should coincide with their economic stake in the community.

Total contributions to the Socialist party campaigns were consistently smaller than those of the opposition groups. In 1935, the Socialists reported receipts of $3,523,[18] which consisted of many small contributions; an allocation from the party's general fund; and individual contributions ranging from $20 to $40 from party candidates. In 1939 the Socialists reported receipts of $3,364,[19] of which two-thirds came from the party's general fund, and some contributions of as much as $100 each from party office-holders. Several factors account for the relatively small expense reported for socialist campaigns. The party organization functions continuously and not merely for specific elections characteristic of the other parties. It has a dues-paying membership, and raises money from many sources, including small personal contributions, literature sales, collections at street meetings, and receipts from party social affairs. At election time, watchers and messengers contribute volunteer services. Advertising expense in the daily press is relatively small because of the party's continuous educational and propagandistic campaign carried on through its own weekly newspaper and campaign leaflets.

It is noticeable that socialist campaign receipts included an increasing number of larger individual contributions as party candidates held more political offices. Whether these contributions were motivated by self-interest to any greater or lesser extent than those of

[17]Official records, Berks County Court House.
[18]*Reading Eagle,* Nov. 19, 1935.
[19]Official records, Berks County Court House.

socialist opponents is difficult to determine. However, their respective class sources are evident. While both the socialist and non-socialist groups received some contributions from political office-holders—individuals, who irrespective of party, develop a vested interest in the continuation of their own party in power—the outstanding contributions to the Republican opposition came from leading members of the professional-proprietary-managerial class, whereas the bulk of socialist financial support came from funds contributed in diverse ways by members of the working classes, supplemented by a financial equivalent in the form of volunteer services

INDUSTRIAL CONFLICT

The development of social thought and action along class lines is also evidenced in the industrial conflicts which shook the community from time to time, especially during the '30s. The reaction to these conflict situations not only shed a new light upon the alleged "conservatism" of the Pennsylvania-Dutch worker, but also afforded the Socialists an opportunity to affirm their adherence to socialist principles in the sphere of economic action, as they had done in the field of political action.

As early as 1877 a strike of the Brotherhood of Railway Enginemen and Firemen, of which Eugene Debs was a prominent official, spread to Reading. A company of Pennsylvania State Militia was ordered to the city to quiet the disturbance which involved many employees in the shops of the Philadelphia and Reading railroad. This precipitated shooting and other violence which culminated in a riot on July 23, resulting in the death of ten persons and considerable destruction of railroad property. James H. Maurer, then a boy of 13, witnessed this affair, writing[20] later that "I had looked on a tragic act in the real drama of class struggle which I was soon to enter". This vivid, adolescent experience made an indelible impression upon the youth who later was to become closely identified with the community's political and industrial struggles.

Nearly 60 years were to elapse before the community experienced another strike involving both death and destruction of property.[21]

[20]Maurer, J. H., *op. cit.*, p. 83.

[21]An employee of the Berkshire Mill (a part of the Wyomissing Industries group) was killed during a strike in the Fall of 1936.

But during that period Reading socialists in their dual role as party members and trade unionists—participated both directly and indirectly in the struggle to further working class interests. During the '90s Maurer's activities in Reading and neighboring communities had led to his being black-listed in the machinist's trade. As a result, when he returned to Reading in 1901, he switched to steamfitting, a trade which was well organized.[22] Within a few years after the organization of the Socialist party, some 12 workers at the Philadelphia and Reading car shops were fired because of their membership in the Socialist party. Our interviews with socialists and trade unionists have repeatedly indicated that, throughout these years, any worker was threatened with job insecurity if he openly participated in trade union or socialist activities, *unless* he was a member of a well organized trade.

It would be impracticable to introduce here an exhaustive history of labor and industrial conflict in Reading. Because of its importance, however, as a part of the total pattern of emerging class alignments and class conflict, we shall focus our attention upon one of the crucial phases of the industrial conflict—the struggles precipitated by the attempt to unionize the full-fashioned silk hosiery industry. The significance of this conflict situation is apparent because: first, the employers, who fought during the past 25 years to maintain a non-union shop in the hosiery industry, were also prominently identified with the opposition to the Socialist party, and were the heaviest financial contributors to this opposition. Second, the Socialists, who had learned by experience the necessity of union organization for job security, openly and actively lent their support to the workers' efforts to unionize this industry.

As indicated in chapter 1, within a twenty-year period (1900-1920), Reading's chief industry shifted from metals and metal products in hosiery. Toward the goal of unionization, intermittent but unsuccessful strikes were called as early as 1914. The unusually high wages[23] paid to full-fashioned hosiery knitters during the early '20s acted as a deterrent to the workers' enthusiasm for unionization.

[22]Maurer, J. H., *op. cit.*, p. 135.

[23]Rogin, L., *Making History in Hosiery*, American Federation of Hosiery Workers, Philadelphia, 1938, p. 13. It was not uncommon for a full-fashioned knitter to receive wages of $100 to $125 per week.

The depression of 1929 had a disastrous effect upon the industry; unemployment increased; and wages dropped in 1930 "to as low as $50 a week", to quote a prominent member of the hosiery union. A general strike in all hosiery plants was called in November for the purpose of halting these wage decreases. It was not successful, despite the thousands of workers who participated. Another general strike was called in 1931 aided by about 3,500 strikers who came in from Philadelphia and New Jersey communities. Five hundred of these strikers camped at the Socialist park near Reading. This strike, too, was unsuccessful, perhaps for reasons summarized in a *Fortune*[24] magazine article at the time, which described the outcome with special reference to the situation in the Berkshire mill:

> "The Socialist city administration in Reading left the pickets pretty much to themselves, and for eight days they agitated with practically no let or hindrance. Then a detachment of the hard-riding, hard-bitten Pennsylvania Mounted Police clattered into town and the pickets suddenly departed. Net results of their eight day siege were a few blackened eyes, a few torn dresses, and not a dozen converts from the 4,000-odd employees in the mills (Berkshire). It was as humiliating a defeat as union labor has ever suffered."

By 1933 wages had dropped to a fourth of the pre-depression scale, but Reading still could be described as the "citadel of the anti-union forces".[25] Although high wages may have acted as a deterrent to union organization in the '20s, it was in all probability *not* the decisive factor accounting for the consistent failure over a longer period to organize the non-union "citadel". For example, Reading hosiery employers—beginning with the suppression at the Nolde and Horst plant in 1914—were opposed to unionization both before and after the booming '20s.

Although as late as 1933 *all* of the Reading mills were still *non-union,* activity in that year initiated a chain of events that sharpened the conflict between union and non-union forces, revealing, in the process, a new insight into the probable causes of the traditional anti-unionism of Reading hosiery employers. Because the Berkshire

[24]*Fortune* magazine, "Berkshire Knitting Mills", January 1932, p. 54-59.
[25]*Ibid.*, "American Federation of Full-Fashioned Hosiery Workers", January 1932, pp. 49, 53.

mill emerged in the '30s as the spearhead of anti-unionism—the most powerful antagonist of the unions, it deserves special mention.

"Chickens and Cabbage Patches"

In January 1932, *Fortune* magazine printed an article entitled "Berkshire Knitting Mills: Seven Tales of the Union's Great Adversary, of an enterprise as personal as it is profitable". Particularly revealing is the description of the Berkshire's labor policy, and the characterization of the Pennsylvania-Dutch worker:

> "In its twenty-two years of existence, Berkshire has never had a strike. Nor has it ever knowingly hired a member of a labor union".

After mentioning the 1931 episode of the 3,500 out-of-town pickets, defeated with the timely aid of the Pennsylvania State Police, the article continued:

> "The Berkshire workers did not strike, partly because they have fared considerably better of late than their union mates. Berkshire has been running closer to its usual production schedule than most union mills."

This statement was supported by Lawrence Rogin[26] who wrote that at this time the unionized sector of Philadelphia was working 45 percent of capacity, while non-union Reading was working 80 percent. However, the *Fortune* writer gave further reasons:

> "But there was more to it than that. Most of Berkshire's workers are Pennsylvania Dutch; loyal, conservative, thrifty . . . most of them live not in Reading but in back country settlements, or on their own little farms. Though today they are getting better wages than are the union workers, several years ago their wage scale was considerably lower than the usual scale. But they are content. They had their chickens and cabbage patches, and they could save more, get along on less than the urban workers around Philadelphia.
>
> "What is more, they understand their two bosses (Thun and Janssen) and their bosses understand them . . . these Pennsylvania Dutch are a jealously independent people . . . the Pennsylvania Dutch respect craftsmanship . . . and respond to it more eagerly than to any sort of higher wage agitation. And so, although Janssen cries 'keep the dynamiters (union men) out',

[26]*Op. cit.*, p. 21.

there is really not much to Berkshire's labor problem. The 'dynamiters' have had several chances in the past year, and they have failed to produce even a minor explosion."

This characterization was written at the end of a decade when the economic situation was undergoing a rapid change. It presented an incomplete picture, partially through neglect of facts that were available and partially through omission of facts that soon were to be revealed through the medium of Federal activity.

In the first place, the idyllic portrayal of the thrifty Pennsylvania Dutchmen, taking time out from their chickens and cabbage patches to work for whatever wages were offered to them in the mills, and deriving more satisfaction from craftsmanship than from agitation for higher wages, is not wholly accurate. The "back-country" Dutch come in the main from prosperous, well-kept farms, and they have little, if anything, in common with the depressed back-country people with whom the uninformed reader might associate them. It is true that sons and daughters did flock to the mills in Reading, as they had been doing since the '90s. It is also true that their innate intelligence and love of thoroughness made them respect craftsmanship wherever they found it. But it is doubtful whether they were motivated any less by the prospect of economic gain than were the founders of the Berkshire Mills themselves, whose more recent Germanic heritage of respect for craftsmanship did not inhibit them from building up a group of industries which, at times, yielded an annual income estimated to run into millions of dollars. Furthermore, a considerable number of Berkshire employees did live in the city and metropolitan area. In fact, the Berkshire owners gave financial assistance to the city in the '20s for the construction of an additional bridge into the city designed to relieve traffic congestion during the rush hours.

However, more significant factors revealed themselves in 1933 and thereafter. The defeat of the Republican Presidential candidate had brought to a close a decade in which there was more "business in government and less government in business"; when "Puddler Jim" Davis represented labor's interests in the Federal administration; when even Thun and Janssen—owners of the Berkshire mills—had their own personal representative—Charles J. Esterly—elected to the United States Congress where he repeatedly sought increases in the

protective tariff on full-fashioned knitting machinery, the manufacture of which was monopolized in the United States by the Wyomissing industrialists. The defeat of the Republican candidate ushered in an era when labor was to receive Federal protection on a level comparable to that which business and industry had always received.

It is revealing, therefore, to observe the effect of this offer of Federal protection to the economic interests of labor both upon the anti-union policies of the Berkshire employers, and upon their Pennsylvania Dutch employees, who were alleged to "respond more eagerly to respect for craftsmanship than to any higher wage agitation".

Section 7 A

The National Industrial Recovery Act signed by President Roosevelt on June 16, 1933, contained the famous Section 7 A wherein the Congress legislated

> "That employees shall have the right to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and shall be free from interference, restraint, or coercion of employers of labor or their agents in the designation of such representatives or in self-organization."

The response of the "conservative" Pennsylvania-Dutch workers in the "citadel of anti-unionism" was virtually instantaneous. Federal guarantee of the right to organize was a sufficient spark to ignite the suppressed union sympathies of the rank and file—potentialities that were never realized because of intimidation, labor spying, and the policy of "never knowingly hiring a member of a labor union". Within a month after the Presidential signing of the Act, the workers in one hosiery mill after another joined in a general strike called by the American Federation of Full-Fashioned Hosiery Workers.

By June 29th, over 4,500 workers in 16 hosiery mills, including the large Nolde and Horst plant, had walked out. Organization activities were progressing in the great Berkshire mill, with 1,200 of its workers holding an open union meeting at the Socialist Park on June 27th, and another on July 1st, when they were addressed by Norman Thomas. The *Labor Advocate*[27] announced that on Wednesday, July 5,

[27] July 7, 1933.

"After a siege of over 20 years, the great Berkshire mills, towering stronghold of anti-unionism, fell. . . . Three thousand workers poured out of the towering hosiery plants against which for years the American Federation of Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers has flung its shock troops with absolutely no visible results."

The addition of the Berkshire workers brought the total of striking hosiery employees to more than 8,000, with only a few of the smaller plants remaining in operation. The development of this first successful general strike in the Reading hosiery area was due largely to the efforts of Emil Rieve, president, Edward Callaghan and Earl White, organizers, John Edelman, research director, and Luther Adams, local leader of the American Federation of Full-Fashioned Hosiery Workers. This hosiery union group was supported by Socialist and Federated Trades Council leaders. At an executive meeting of the Federated Trades Council on June 27, the president was authorized to appoint an organization committee "to assist the hosiery workers and all other working class groups in their attempts to organize". This committee included James H. Maurer, former councilman and head of the United Workers Federation of Pennsylvania; former mayor J. Henry Stump; Andrew P. Bower, vice-president of the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor; councilmen Jesse E. George and William C. Hoverter; Earl White, secretary of the United Workers Federation; Stewart Tomlinson, vice-president of the Federated Trades Council; Lindsay Ross, business representative of the Carpenters' Union; Francis Klemmer, business representative of the Plumbers' Union; and George M. Rhodes, president of the Federated Trades Council. Most of these committee members were active in the Socialist party. The president of the Trades Council then issued the following statement:[28]

"For the benefit of those who might be deceived with the statement of hosiery manufacturers about out of town agitators, we wish to announce that the Federated Trades Council of Reading and Berks County vouches for the sincerity, integrity and loyalty of officials of the Hosiery Workers Union and other labor representatives who are in Reading at present.

"We endorse the struggle of the hosiery workers in their attempt to organize. We call upon all union men and sympathizers to assist fellow workers in the hosiery industry in their fight for organization and freedom.

"The workers have an opportunity and the right to organize under the industrial recovery bill and we most emphatically urge them to take advantage of this chance before it is too late."

[28] *Reading Eagle*, June 27, 1933.

Strikes spread rapidly to other industries, and a week later, on July 12, one of the greatest manifestations of labor solidarity in the history of the city occurred when approximately 20,000 strikers and sympathizers marched in a street parade. More than half were hosiery workers who had succeeded in tying up virtually the entire industry throughout the county. Singing labor songs and carrying placards as they marched, the situation revealed the militant potentialities of these "conservative Pennsylvania-Dutch" once they were afforded the opportunity to openly express their sentiments. For years they had demonstrated their approval of political action by the working classes through the medium of the Socialist party, and their approval of labor organization through the unions associated in the Federated Trades Council. Hence this demonstration was, in a way, a reaffirmation of their fundamental adherence to class action; capable now of being *openly expressed with respect to the anti-union hosiery employers*. It doubtless came as a surprise to anti-union elements who had fallen into the dangerous error of identifying subservience to coercion and intimidation with disapproval of unionism.

An agreement to settle the strike was finally reached on August 10, 1933 through mediation by the newly created National Labor Board. Shop elections under the supervision of a representative of the Board were held soon thereafter. The union candidates in all of the mills were the presidents of the Federation of Hosiery Workers and of the local Branch 10 of that union, and if elected, they were to represent the employees *as individuals* rather than as a union in the plants where they received a majority of the votes. The results[29] of the balloting showed a sweeping victory for the union candidates. Approximately 14,000 ballots were cast in 46 mills, and 36 of them indicated union preference by a ratio of 3 to 1. Among the 36 were all of the larger mills such as the Berkshire, Nolde and Horst, Rosedale, and Oakbrook. This overwhelming preference for union repre-

[29] *Ibid.*, August 24, 1933.

sentation had thus become articulate when the Federal authority guaranteed the principle of collective bargaining and the holding of a free electon.

After the NIRA was declared unconstitutional in July 1935, wages were cut, and many employers encouraged the setting up of employees' associations (company unions). A publication, the *Hosiery Examiner*, with a pronounced anti-union bias, made its appearance. In October, 1936, a strike was called at the Berkshire mill, and in the resulting conflict between strikers and non-strikers, one of the latter was killed. Late in November the strikers inaugurated a policy of "non-violent resistance" in the form of a novel technique—the "lying-down" strike. As reported in the *New York Times*:[30]

> "Resisting tear gas and sub-freezing temperatures, a living carpet of hosiery strike pickets lay on the pavement today before the Berkshire Knitting Mills in suburban Wyomissing . . . they blocked the main entrance . . . from 5 to 7 A.M.
>
> "After tear gas had failed to rout the outstretched strikers, because of a stiff breeze that whipped the fumes away, police of Wyomissing and West Reading boroughs arrested fifty-eight persons. . . .
>
> "The strikers were sentenced under a Wyomissing ordinance prohibiting 'loafing, loitering, or standing so as to prevent the free and open passage of residents or travelers' . . .
>
> "This morning's non-resistance lying-down strike was carried out with due warning to police and without any trace of violence by the strikers. . . . Messages were sent in advance to police of both boroughs, explaining exactly what would happen."

A general strike for recognition of the union was called March 1, 1937, and resulted in signed agreements with 23 of the plants. The Berkshire, however, continued its anti-union policies. In November, 1939, the NLRB had ordered the company to disestablish The Berkshire Employees' Association, holding that it was created and subsidized by the company to prevent Branch 10 of the Hosiery Workers Union, CIO,[31] from unionizing its plants. The Board had ordered the reinstatement of approximately 800 employees who had participated in the 1936-1937 strike. The execution of the order was defied by the Berkshire, and as late as April 7, 1941, the company appealed to the Federal Court of Philadelphia, their counsel contending that the NLRB had "delayed" presentation to the court of the five year old dispute between the company and the Hosiery Workers' Union.[32]

Another aspect of class conflict in the community was revealed in testimony presented at hearings before the LaFollette Committee[33] in Washington in 1936. Local workers had for years charged Berks county hosiery manufacturers with the use of labor spies and private detective and strike-breaking agencies to prevent unionization. The hearings brought out the roles played by the Railway Audit and Inspection company, the H. C. Cummings detective agency, and others, in the employment of labor spies and strike-breakers both in the Reading area and throughout the entire hosiery industry.[34] The revelation of these conditions within the "citadel of anti-unionism" proved that accusations by local workers were well founded and were not the product of un-American agitation designed to undermine confidence in the existing social order.

All of these anti-union activities of the hosiery manufacturers are especially significant for our study because they were an integral part of the pattern of class conflict within which the Reading socialists and union forces were arrayed on one side against the employers and the non-socialist opposition on the other. The heavy financial contributions of these manufacturers to the campaign chests of the political groups opposing the socialists were a crucial manifestation of this identity of interest.

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[30]Dec. 1, 1936. Wyomissing is an incorporated borough near the city. It has been dominated for years by the Berkshire interests. However, it is not a working class community. Of its 788 families in 1930, 656 owned their homes which had a median value of $11,225; and 132 rented their homes at a median monthly rental of $50. Both these median values were much higher than those of either the city or any other incorporated borough in the entire metropolitan district.

[31]The American Federation of Hosiery Workers affiliated with the CIO after the split between the AF of L and the CIO.

[32]*Reading Times*, April 8, 1941.

[33]Hearings before a Sub-committee of the Committee on Education and Labor, United States Senate, 74th Congress, Second Session, on S. Res. 266: *A Resolution to Investigate Violations of the Right of Free Speech and Assembly and Interference with the Right of Labor to Organize and Bargain Collectively*, April 10-23, 1936, Washington, 1936, pp. 159-241. Also see later volumes.

[34]*Ibid.*, especially pp. 159-166, 185, 187, 189, 191, 195-202, 212-215, 219-220.

SUMMARY

Materials introduced particularly in this chapter, but also in earlier chapters, clearly point to the working class nature of the Socialist movement. Its leadership was composed largely of representatives of the skilled working class—men who combined organization on the economic front through the medium of the trades unions with that on the political front through the medium of the Socialist party. They gave the city, for the first time in its history, an administration whose composition was overwhelmingly working class. This may be described as a *class* government, though it really involved a *transfer* of municipal leadership from representatives of the professional-proprietary-managerial class. Because the skilled and semiskilled working classes constituted more than 50 percent of the population in 1930, the Socialist administration was in fact *more representative* of a majority of the population than the opposition groups whose leaders were drawn largely from the professional-proprietary-managerial class which constituted only 11 percent of the total population. Even if clerical workers are included, the opposition groups still would be representative of only 27 percent of the total population. *In fact,* opposition administrations were really more in the nature of *class governments,* though they rarely were regarded as such because of the democratic belief that the elected candidates of any party represent the entire community regardless of class. The educational and propagandistic campaigns of the Socialist party across the years did much to convince the electorate that working class representatives could run an administration; a contention that was validated by their subsequent efficiency in office. They not only functioned in the interest of the entire community *as much as any opposition administration,* but represented larger segments of the class hierarchy. One of the principal achievements of the Socialist party was the political organization of the skilled and semiskilled classes who previously had to accept the political leadership of members of other classes. This evidence of the class character of the Socialist movement was corroborated by the class nature of the source of financial support of opposition groups. The meaningfulness of this financial support was further enhanced when examined in the light of the conflicting employer and labor

groups that manoeuvered for power during the '30s. Financial support for the Socialist opposition came from the *identical* groups that fought to prevent labor organization in the key industry in the city's economic life. This community of political and economic interests within the opposition demonstrated that the Socialist party had become the organizational spearhead of the working classes who had become aroused to thought and action in terms of competing and conflicting class interests. We now turn to a consideration of the socio-economic class nature of the electorate that supported or opposed socialist candidates, since it offers further, if not conclusive, evidence of the class nature of the socialist movement.

Chapter 5

CLASS vs. CLASS
(Continued)

THE CLASS NATURE OF MASS SOCIALIST SUPPORT

While there is every indication from the data already analyzed that the Reading socialist movement is a class movement, it is felt that the evidence would be more conclusive if it included, in addition, an analysis of the socio-economic status of the mass of voters who supported or opposed the candidates and issues of the Socialist party. This additional evidence is considered essential for the following reasons:

First: The existence of a group advocating a Socialist ideology in a community is not evidence, *per se,* that there is any broad class support.

Second: The advocacy of a socialist program in the name of any particular economic or occupational group is not evidence, *per se,* that the program is supported by the particular classes to which the appeal is directed. Thus in Reading, the leadership of the socialist group was in the hands of trade unionists, but support for their candidates may have come from all occupational or economic groups, irrespective of their social or economic position. That this type of possibility exists is evidenced by the lack of correlation between economic status and the support of certain Socialist candidates in other cities. Also, opponents of social reform or outright socialist programs may receive their mass support, not only from the favored economic classes possessing the greatest stake in the status quo, but from persons in all strata who, for divergent reasons, may feel that the existent scheme of things offers more prospects for them than any new and untried plan for social and economic reorganization. This latter condition is especially present if the social and economic issues are not clear cut, but complicated by extraneous factors such as differences in race, national origin, religion, or cultural tradition.

Third: The issues of a class nature which were fought over so

vehemently in speech-making, newspaper, and advertising channels during election campaigns are not evidence, *per se,* that they are the true issues that decide the election or rejection of a candidate or party. There is always the possibility that these issues are fabricated by political cliques as a means for securing lucrative positions, and that the voters really support a candidate or party on the basis of personalities, or even the mere desire for a change in administration. For example, no candidate for mayor in Reading had succeeded himself during the past forty years, and in most cases there had been a shift to another political party.[1]

Proceeding on the assumption that the measurement of the class basis of *mass* Socialist support would offer conclusive evidence of the class character of the Socialist movement—when considered in connection with other evidences of its class nature—the question arose concerning the selection of a workable and convenient means for achieving this end.

The first step was to secure a quantitative measure of Socialist support, by population units within the city, and this was available in the official election returns for candidates of all parties *by wards.* Since the plan was to correlate the proportion of vote for the various party candidates with indices of economic status, home tenure, and nativity by wards, relatively complete data on the vote for three offices were secured. These included the vote for (1) *mayor*—an official elected on the basis of local issues; (2) *President*—an election involving national issues; and (3) *Congressman*—an election involving the selection of a candidate representing local interests in the national legislature. The vote for mayor was considered adequate as an index of socialist support on local issues, particularly in Reading, where such support in any year is usually a party vote because of the relatively small margin of difference between votes for all Socialist candidates. The vote for President was chosen for the purpose of comparing a vote involving national issues with one involving purely local issues, in addition to the fact that being held in even years, it would reveal differences, if any, with support received by Socialist candidates in odd years. The Con-

[1]It should be noted, however, that the Socialist candidate for re-election was defeated by a narrow margin in the 1931 municipal campaign when class lines were very sharply drawn.

gressional vote is not treated as intensively as the others, serving merely as a check on any significant changes in class support that might have occured in inter-Presidential years. Election data were secured for other municipal, county, and state offices but were not subjected to correlation analysis. Those selected seemed sufficiently representative for the purpose of studying the class aspects of the movement.[2]

For each of the wards, the vote for Socialist, Republican, and Democratic candidates was expressed as a percentage of the total ward vote. Then each of these ward series of percentages, by candidates—regarded as the dependent variable—were correlated with the proportion of homes owned; the proportion of native whites of native parentage; and the economic score (a measure of economic status), respectively—each of the latter considered an independent variable. Each coefficient obtained was based on the correlation between the proportion of vote in a given year and the data available for the other variables in the nearest Census year. For example, the Socialist proportion of vote for mayor in 1919 was correlated with home ownership or nativity as of 1920, whereas the Socialist proportion of vote for mayor in 1931 was correlated with similar Census data as of 1930.

It must be borne in mind that the quantitative treatment of our data revolves around three Census years: *1910*—at the center of the 1905-1915 decade when the Socialist party first demonstrated its growing strength; *1920*—at the center of the 1915-1925 decade when the Reading Socialist party recovered quickly from the setback received by all socialist groups because of war-time hysteria; and *1930*—the center of the 1925-1935 decade in which the local Socialist party achieved the height of its power. No correlations were made with *1900* Census data because the Socialist proportion of vote was very small in the earlier years of the movement.

Of the three Census years used, 1930 is the most significant for our quantitative analysis, not merely because it coincides with the

[2]A prohibitive amount of labor is involved in calculating an additional set of simple correlation coefficients for even one office. For example, for an office such as mayor, values of r must be calculated between the proportion of vote for at least three candidates (Socialist, Republican, and Democrat), and at least three variables (Economic score, home tenure, and nativity), in at least five successive elections (in some cases more, when variables are available for earlier Census years).

period of most extensive socialist control, but because it was the first year in which the Federal government gathered and published data on the value of monthly rentals and owned homes for the non-farm population of the entire United States.[3] These data are of crucial importance because they provide a basis for rating each ward according to economic status.[4] They are particularly valuable for the correlation analysis of the mayoralty elections of 1927, 1931, and 1935, and the Presidential elections of 1928 and 1932. They permitted the computation of correlations with this variable back to 1927—a pre-depression year when the socialists scored their first municipal victory; and forward to 1931 and 1935—depression years during which the socialists encountered the bitterest class opposition in local political history.

The correlation coefficients derived from our data are designed to show the degree of association between voting behavior and selected variables, not only within any particular election year, but also over a period of years. It is thereby possible to see at a glance whether there were any significant changes in the degree of support which candidates received from home owners or native white persons of native parentage from 1910 to 1935. Similarly, with 1930 as the base year for the computation of an index of economic status, it is possible to view any shifts or trends in voting support according to economic position which took place from 1924 to 1936. While correlations between the economic score and voting behavior in 1923-24, and 1939-40 are included, it is recognized that their validity may be questioned because of their remoteness from the base year. There is some basis for the belief, however, that the *relative* character of the population *by wards* changed very little from decade to decade.[5]

[3]Similar data were also gathered in the 1940 Census, but were not available for this study.

[4]A direct question on income was asked in the 1940 Census, but the results by wards were not available in time for this study.

[5]For example, there is a correlation of .94 between native whites of native parentage in 1930 and 1920, and of .68 between 1930 and 1900; and a correlation of .95 between per capita taxable property in 1930 and 1898.

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN VOTING BEHAVIOR AND HOME OWNERSHIP

In the initial stage of this study, the degree of association between voting behavior and home ownership[6] was the first type of relationship analyzed because of the popularly held assumption that *ownership of property,* per se,—as a vested interest in the status quo—acted as a deterrent to the owner's support of any group advocating a basic change in the principles underlying property relationships. Whether there is any essential truth in this assumption is beside the point as long as there is a belief in its efficacy. For example, there is the common anti-socialist argument that socialist principles have little appeal to an individual once he has acquired title to even the smallest piece of property, or share of stock. Public utility companies and other private corporations have made it their policy to secure a wide distribution of stock among their consumers or employees on the ground that even the most infinitesimal stake in ownership would take the edge off of any agitation for reduced rates or an increase in wages.

Our analysis revealed high correlations, especially during the '20s and '30s, but they ran contrary to this popularly held belief. Beginning with 1920, a positive relationship was revealed between the Socialist vote for mayor and the proportion of owned homes. Significant values of r begin with .58 in 1919; rise to .76 in 1927, and remain at virtually the same level during the '30s, with the exception of 1935 when there was a recession to .55 (Tables 5 and 6). A negative relationship was found between both Republican and Democratic candidacies and home ownership, with the trend increasing during the '20s and '30s, though more pronounced in the case of the Democratic party (Tables 5 and 6). The negative Democratic correlations would by themselves not seem contradictory since they would be consistent with the positive correlation between the Democratic vote and foreign parentage within the city.[7] Several reasons suggest themselves as accounting for this apparent incompatibility between the Republican and Socialist correlations with home ownership.

[6]See tables VIII and IX for comparison between home ownership data for Reading and other selected cities.

[7]However, the rural portions of the county, where the native-born Pennsylvania-Dutch farmers predominate, have supported the Democratic party for generations, thereby furnishing the basis for the county's designation as the "Gibraltar of Democracy".

Rice, in a study which included a rating of the American States according to political "insurgency", found no evidence of any relationship between farm tenancy and political unrest in rural states.[8] Lundberg, in a comparative study of ten radical and ten conservative counties in North Dakota and Minnesota found that "although a larger percentage of the farms in radical counties are operated by 'owners', technically speaking, the larger percentage of farms mortgaged indicates that this ownership is only legal and technical."[9]

TABLE 5

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN PROPORTION OF VOTE FOR MAYOR (1911-1931) BY POLITICAL PARTIES, AND SELECTED VARIABLES (1910-1930), READING, PENNA.

	Homes Owned Percent			Native White of Native Parentage Percent		
Vote	1910	1920	1930	1910	1920	1930
Socialist						
1911	.19			.06		
1919		.58			—.01	
1931			.73			—.09
Republican						
1911	—.01			.36		
1919		—.28			—.13	
1931			—.44			.39
Democrat						
1911	—.21			—.58		
1919		—.47			0	
1931			—.69			—.44

NOTE: The 1920 and 1930 coefficients are based on data for *18* wards. For the significance of r when n=18, see Note attached to Table 6.

The 1910 coefficients are based on data for *16* wards, requiring a slightly higher value of r for significance. Thus when r=.505, it equals four times its *P.E.;* and when r=.62, P (level of significance for values of t) equals .01.

Neprash, in an analysis of the Brookhart campaigns in Iowa, also found a negative relationship between farm tenancy and support for Brookhart. As an explanation, Neprash writes that "In Iowa, farm tenancy is positively associated to a very high degree with land values (r=.77) so that the negative relationship between tenancy and Brookhart sentiment is actually the result of the negative association of Brookhartism and land values and the positive

[8]Rice, Stuart A., *Farmers and Workers in American Politics,* Columbia Univ. Press, New York, 1924, pp. 52-53.

[9]Lundberg, George A., "The Demographic and Economic Basis of Political

association of the land values with farm tenancy."[10] Although these studies dealt with rural states or counties, they indicate—with respect to the relationship between farm tenancy and radicalism—that the *fact* of ownership, as such, is not an explanatory factor in accounting for political radicalism, but instead must be analyzed in terms of its economic components, of which "mortgage status" is one example. While no attempt has been made to study the relationship between the "mortgage status" of home owners and voting behavior in Reading—chiefly because such data were not gathered for urban communities in the 1930 Census—there is some indication that home ownership may be a function of land values within the city, as evidenced by the negative correlation of per capita taxable property with homes owned in 1930 (r=—.68).

Thus where land values are high there is less of a tendency toward home ownership. This is especially true in and near the central business district. Surrounding this area of high land values and high average rentals are larger areas of working class and moderate middle-class homes, many of which are owned, and from which the Socialists received considerable support. Many of the newer and more expensive homes—following the urban ecological pattern—lie beyond the city limits. This is significant inasmuch as families owning *higher-valued* homes thereby do not participate in the actual election of municipal candidates; though, as indicated in chapter 4, some of these families indirectly influence the selection of municipal candidates through the heavy financial support they lend to non-socialist parties. These "higher-class" residential suburbs developed east and west of the city chiefly during the '20s, and were part of the suburban movement of that decade when the population of the city remained virtually static.[11]

Another reason which cannot be overlooked as a partial explana-

Radicalism and Conservatism", *American Journal of Sociology,* Vol. XXXII, No. 5, March 1927, p. 730.

[10]Neprash, Jerry A., *The Brookhart Campaigns in Iowa, 1920-1926,* Columbia Univ. Press, New York, 1932, pp. 74-75.

[11]Between 1920 and 1930 the population of the city increased from 107 to 111 thousand (3 percent) whereas the population of the metropolitan district beyond the city limits increased from 36 to 59 thousand (61 percent). There were no land annexations to Reading of any appreciable size since 1917 with the result that its small land area (9.5 square miles) and high population density (11,677 per square mile) were conducive to population expansion beyond the city limits.

tion for the high positive correlation between socialist support and home ownership was the controversy over tax assessments during the '20s. The socialists contended that assessments were inequitable,

TABLE 6

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN PROPORTION OF VOTE FOR MAYOR (1923-1939) BY POLITICAL PARTIES, AND SELECTED VARIABLES (1930), READING, PENNA.

Vote	Economic Score[a] 1930	Homes Owned Percent 1930	Native White of Native Parentage Percent 1930
Socialist			
1923	—.49		
1927	—.63	.76	.13
1931	—.77	.73	—.09
1935	—.88	.55	—.33
1939	—.68	.73	
Republican			
1923	.58		
1927	.69	—.59	.11
1931	.84	—.44	.39
1935	.85	—.54	.38
1939	.84	—.18	
Democrat			
1923	.08		
1927	.31	—.71	—.42
1931	.15	—.69	—.44
1935	.79	—.48	.23
1939	—.14	—.62	

[a]The economic scores is a composite index based on a weighted combination of rental and home values.

NOTE: These cofficients are based on data for *18* wards. The significance of selected values of r according to their *P.E.*, and the t test are as follows:

r	*P.E.*	t	*P.*
.10	.16	.402	.7
.486	.121	2.224	.04
.59	.10	2.921	.01
.90	.03	8.259	

Thus all r values of .486 or more are significant according to the test for probable error (Chaddock, *Principles and Methods of Statistics,* p. 275) since they equal or exceed 4 times their *P.E.;* and all r values of .59 or more are significant according to the t test (Croxton and Cowden, *Applied General Statistics,* p. 875) since the probability is 1 or less in 100 that the correlations are due to chance.

i.e., too high for small property owners and too low for the larger property owners. This was one of the issues in the 1927 campaign, and after the socialists took office they proceeded with a new assess-

ment which resulted, according to Hodges, in "relatively higher values on all central real estate and lower appraisements on the small homes away from the center of the city."[12] Inasmuch as most of the families within the city were small home owners, the assessment issue could have contributed somewhat to the high correlation (r=.76) with the Socialist vote, and the high negative correlations with Republican and Democratic support in 1927 (Table 6). However, a more fundamental economic class factor was probably involved, especially since a positive relationship with home ownership also characterized support for the Socialist Presidential candidates from 1928 to 1936 (Table 7). In those elections no local issues were involved, and when we consider that the Socialists polled very nearly one-third of the total city vote for their canidates—Thomas and Maurer—in 1932 (r=.81), the conclusion seems inevitable that socialist endorsement by home owners was not motivated simply by the desire to secure lower tax assessments.

Proof of the extent to which a socio-economic class factor is concealed in these home ownership correlations will be offered presently when we examine the relationship between voting behavior and economic status. Before turning to that analysis, however, we shall consider some correlations on the association between voting behavior and nativity.

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN VOTING BEHAVIOR AND NATIVITY

In chapter 1 we pointed out that Reading is unique among industrial cities of more than 100,000 persons because of its small foreign born, and native white of foreign parentage groups. From 1890 to 1930, its foreign born population never exceeded nine percent, and its native white of native parentage population dropped merely from 80 to 72 percent between 1890 and 1930. Because of the small foreign born group, our correlations between nativity and voting behavior are based on the *native white of native parentage* percentages since these represent a more precise measure of the indigenous American group, excluding not only the foreign born, but also the native born whose parents were of foreign or mixed parentage. If there was any tendency for first or second generation groups of foreign parentage to flock to the standard of an allegedly un-American Socialist party, it should be revealed in these correlations.

[12] *Op. cit.*, pp. 283-284.

TABLE 7

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN PROPORTION OF VOTE FOR PRESIDENT (1924-1940) BY POLITICAL PARTIES, AND SELECTED VARIABLES (1930), READING, PENNA.

Vote	Economic Score 1930	Homes Owned Percent 1930	Native White of Native Parentage Percent 1930
Socialist			
1924[a]	—.57	.57[b]	.05[b]
1928	—.55	.68	.17
1932	—.65	.81	.08
1936	—.67	.62	—.15
1940	—.32		
Republican			
1924	.70		
1928	.70	.11	.76
1932	.84	—.28	.50
1936	.88	—.20	.58
1940	.86		
Democrat			
1924	—.21		
1928	—.45	—.34	—.76
1932	—.27	—.57	—.68
1936	—.84	.08	—.64
1940	—.83		

See Note to Table 6 for an explanation of the significance of values of r based on data for 18 wards.

[a] Vote for LaFollette-Wheeler ticket, officially endorsed by the Socialist party.

[b] Correlations with 1920 percent of homes owned, and 1920 percent of native whites of native parentage.

However, examination of the nativity correlations (Tables 5, 6, and 7) indicates that there is *not even one* significant correlation between Socialist support and nativity from 1910 to 1935 in municipal elections, and none in the Presidential elections of 1928 and 1932. There is not even a significant positive correlation, the existence of which might have been interpreted as a blanket disapproval of socialist policies by recent foreign groups which migrated pre-

dominantly from countries of Catholic origin.[13] This would seem to corroborate our contention that the movement is indicative of socio-economic class alignments, rather than racial, nativity, or religious factors.

With respect to Republican support and nativity, there is also no significant correlation from 1910 to 1935 in municipal elections (Tables 5 and 6), though there were tendencies in the positive direction in 1931 and 1935. Significant positive correlations existed in the Presidential elections from 1928 through 1936.

With respect to Democratic support and nativity, there were more pronounced tendencies toward a negative relationship in the municipal elections of 1927 and 1931 (Table 6). High correlations of a consistently negative nature were revealed in the Presidential elections of 1928 through 1936 (Table 7).

Hence, among all the nativity correlations, only those with Republican (positive) and Democratic (negative) candidates in Presidential years are significant. None of any significance were discovered with respect to Socialist candidates in either municipal or Presidential elections. In addition, a test correlation between Socialist support in 1931 and the percent of foreign-born in 1930 was found to be .008, of little or no significance.

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN VOTING BEHAVIOR AND ECONOMIC STATUS

From the outset of this study the conviction was maintained that any evidence pointing to the class nature of the movement would be greatly strengthened if proofs of an objective and quantitative nature could be introduced to corroborate the interpretation of other types of data. This seemed especially necessary if any conclusions were to be drawn concerning the class basis, if any, of the mass support of Socialist candidates. This necessitated the selection of an index of economic status that would permit the ranking of the population of each of the city's wards, toward the end of correlating them with the percentage of voting support accorded to each party's candidates. Data on monthly rentals and value of owned homes had been gathered for the first time for all urban families by the

[13]See table III.

United States Census Bureau in 1930, and were available for each of the 18 wards. In lieu of direct Census data on income[14] for all classes of the population, these values provide the most satisfactory alternative, especially since rental values are closely correlated with family income.[15] The mean average rental[16] was calculated for each ward together with their deviations from the mean of the entire series. This process was repeated for the values of owned homes,[17] and the two series were combined by adding their deviations from the mean divided by their respective standard deviations, each series being weighted by the percent of homes in each group.[18] Ogburn and Hill, in studying the relationship between income classes and the Roosevelt vote in 1932, combined the rental and home values in their urban series through translating values of homes not rented into rental values by considering monthly rent as equal to one and one-quarter percent of the value.[19] This latter technique was rejected in the present study chiefly because correspondence with local real estate men revealed disagreement as to what ratio should be used. And yet it seemed essential to combine the series of relative economic rankings because the proportion of rented homes varied from 30 to 76 percent among the wards, implying that an index based exclusively on rental values would in some cases represent less than a third of the families. Hence, the technique of combining the deviations from the mean of each series, divided by their respective standard deviations, and weighted by the percent of homes in each group was resorted to. This, in fact, was the method used by Ogburn and Hill in the study referred to above,[20] when they handled rural data and were faced with the necessity of combining an economic index of per capita income of farmers (for which rental values were not available) with an economic index based on rental values for the rural non-farm population.

[14]Such data were gathered by the Census Bureau in 1940.

[15]Ogburn, W. F., "A Study of Rents in Various Cities", *Monthly Labor Review*, Sept. 1919, pp. 1-22.

[16]Median averages were also calculated, but after a number of test correlations between the economic score and voting behavior revealed consistently significant, but slightly lower values of r, they were rejected in favor of the economic score based on mean averages because of its apparent greater sensitivity.

[17]See table XXIX.

[18]See table XXX.

[19]Ogburn, W. F., and Hill, Estelle, "Income Classes and the Roosevelt Vote in 1932", *Political Science Quarterly*, June 1935, pp. 186-193.

[20]*Ibid.*, p. 191.

While either the rental or home value series would have served our purpose adequately, since they are closely correlated with each other (r=.90), it was felt that the index of economic status, or *economic score,* derived by a combination of both series, was the most accurate and representative for the *entire* population. In essence, it permits the ranking of each ward on a scale of relative economic values, thereby providing a variable of economic status that may be correlated with voting behavior.[21]

A remarkable degree of association between economic status and the vote for Socialist and Republican candidates in municipal elections is revealed, not only in specific years, but also over the span of years for which the use of the economic score as a variable is considered defensible (Table 6). That mass voting support for the Socialists was recruited from the lower income groups, with accelerated intensity, is reflected in coefficients ranging from —.49 in 1923 to —.88 in 1935 (the last election prior to the split in the Socialist party). Exactly parallel to this was the increasing support from the higher income groups for the Republican candidates, ranging from coefficients of .58 in 1923 to .85 in 1935. For Democratic candidates there were no significant economic coefficients until 1935 when a positive r value of .79 reflected the height of the division in voting along class lines between the Socialists on the one hand, and the Republicans and Democrats on the other.

If correlations between the vote for mayor and rental and home values are made separately (Table 8), values of r are as significant as those obtained when the combined index is used as a variable. These coefficients were derived on the supposition that the combined index might conceal some important variations between rental and home values. The only noticeable differences, however, are the consistently lower values of r in the rental series—applicable, with equal intensity, to all parties. Whenever the economic status coefficient is significant, the corresponding rental or home value coefficient also exceeds four times its probable error.

Turning to the Presidential elections held in even years when

[21]The series of economic scores, by wards, is given in table XXX, with similar data for Milwaukee in table XXXII, and for Bridgeport in table XXXIV. Unfortunately, data on number and percent of votes, by wards, for all parties in these three cities in years for which correlations are derived cannot be included for lack of space. However, they are available for examination from the author.

local issues are at a minimum, both Socialist and Republican voting behavior are significantly correlated with the economic score (Table 7)—similar to those of local elections held in odd years—though there is one noticeable variation which is significant from the class angle. Whereas the Democratic vote for mayor in 1935 showed a positive correlation of .79 with the economic score (Table 6), the Democratic vote for President one year later revealed a negative coefficient of —.84 (Table 7), indicating a shift in the class vote from the Socialist candidate in the 1935 local election to the support of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936. This is substantiated by the

TABLE 8

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN PROPORTION OF VOTE FOR MAYOR (1927-1935) BY POLITICAL PARTIES, AND RENTAL AND HOME VALUES (1930), READING, PENNA.

Vote	Economic Score[a] 1930	Rental Values 1930	Home Values 1930
Socialist			
1927	—.63	—.49	—.70
1931	—.77	—.66	—.82
1935	—.88	—.79	—.89
Republican			
1927	.69	.58	.72
1931	.84	.80	.82
1935	.85	.77	.86
Democrat			
1927	.31	.18	.41
1931	.15	—.01	.26
1935	.79	.70	.81

[a]The Economic Score is a composite index based on a weighted combination of rental and home values.

NOTE: For the significance of these values of r, see Note to Table 6.

correlation of .81 between the Socialist vote for mayor in 1935 and the Democratic vote for President in 1936, and a negative correlation of —.69 between the Democratic vote for mayor in 1935 and the endorsement of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936. While the Socialist Presidential vote continued to show a significant negative correlation in 1936, it was based on only five percent of the total vote. Thus the thousands of voters of *lower economic status* who had supported Socialists in previous local and national elections shifted to endorsement of the Democratic group in 1936, and repeated the performance in 1940 (Table 7).

Voting behavior in Congressional elections, held biennially in even years, corroborates the class alignments for the various parties revealed in municipal and Presidential elections (Table 9).

In chapter 2 we indicated the high ratio of Socialist voting strength to Socialist registration. Correlating the economic score with registration in the various parties (Table 10), the values of *r* for Socialists and Republicans are consistent with their voting behavior. Registered Democrats, however, reveal coefficients at variance with voting behavior in local elections, indicating that in the year 1935 and 1939—for which registration data by wards are available—there was a tendency for registered Democrats of lower economic status to vote Socialist, leading us to believe that economic status took precedence over party affiliation in local elections—with

TABLE 9

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN PROPORTION OF VOTE FOR CONGRESSMAN (1926-1936) BY POLITICAL PARTIES, AND THE ECONOMIC SCORE (1930), READING, PENNA.

	Socialist	Republican	Democrat
1926	—.55	.51	—.17
1930	—.72	.77	.25
1934	—.76	.88	.02
1936	—.56	.88	—.60

NOTE: For significance of values of *r*, see Note to Table 6.

Socialist and Republican supporters divided on a class basis. In Presidential elections, economic status coincided more closely with party affiliation—with Democratic and Republican supporters divided on a class basis. It must be emphasized, however, that the latter type of class division between Democratic and Republican voters over national issues did not exist in Reading prior to 1936—as indicated in the Presidential correlations with economic status (Table 7). It developed only after New Deal reform measures attracted an increasingly potent class vote which served to undermine support for traditional left-wing parties—a trend, which when augmented by the internal dissension within the Socialist party, resulted in the virtual disappearance of the Socialist party as a national influence in 1940.

An issue which precipitated voting along sharp class lines oc-

curred in 1937. The Socialists sponsored a bond issue which would have authorized the municipality to build or acquire a municipal power plant at a cost of approximately five million dollars. One-third of the electorate voted "yes" on this issue, and the correlations with this vote (Table 11) are strikingly similar to those usually derived from the Socialist vote, with the addition of support from voters of foreign parentage.

In the same way that we demonstrated the class occupational character of Socialist and non-Socialist leadership, it would have been equally desirable to offer objective evidence on the occupational nature of the groups supporting the Socialist program. This

TABLE 10

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN REGISTRATION (1935, 1939) BY POLITICAL PARTIES, AND SELECTED VARIABLES (1930), READING, PENNA.

Registration	Economic Score 1930	Homes Owned Percent 1930	Native White of Native Parentage Percent 1930
Socialist, 1935	—.74	.71	—.33
Socialist, 1939	—.65	.63	
Republican, 1935	.81	—.28	.53
Republican, 1939	.84	—.16	
Democrat, 1935	—.46	—.14	—.47
Democrat, 1939	—.67	—.16	

NOTE: For significance of values of *r*, see Note to Table 6.

was impossible, however, because the Census Bureau does not publish occupational data *by wards*. It would have been possible to secure an occupational distribution of registrants in the various parties, inasmuch as this question is asked and the answer recorded on individual registration cards by the County Board of Election Commissioners. There is some doubt, though, as to whether the occupational categories recorded would coincide with those of the Census Bureau. Furthermore they would not have served our purpose fully since they measure occupations by formal party registration rather than by voting support.

There is reason to assume, however, that significant economic status correlations imply support from various broad occupational types. This is indicated in estimates of income by occupational

groups prepared by the National Resources Committee.[22] That study present a hierarchy of income groups for American families, ranging from farmers at the bottom through wage-earning, clerical, independent business, salaried professional, and salaried business groups to the independent professional group at the top—ranked according to mean average income. But despite this obvious relationship between income and broad occupational groups, it would be

TABLE 11
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN "YES" VOTE ON MUNICIPAL POWER BOND ISSUE (1937) AND SELECTED VARIABLES (1930), READING, PENNA.

	Yes Vote
Economic Score, 1930	—.85
Rental Values, 1930	—.84
Home Values, 1930	—.80
Homes Owned, 1930	.47
Native White of Native Parentage, 1930	—.50

TABLE 12
MISCELLANEOUS CORRELATIONS, READING, PENNA.

Economic Score and Native White of Native Parentage, 1930	.58
Economic Score and Foreign Born White, 1930	—.51
Economic Score and Per Capita Taxable Property, 1930	.74
Homes Owned and Per Capita Taxable Property, 1930	—.68
Rental Values and Home Values, 1930	.90
Per Capita Taxable Property, 1930 and 1898	.95
Homes Owned, 1930 and 1920	.87
Native White of Native Parentage, 1930 and 1920	.94
Native White of Native Parentage, 1930 and 1900	.68
Socialist Vote for Mayor, and Socialist Registration, 1935	.81
Republican Vote for Mayor, and Republican Registration, 1935	.94
Democratic Vote for Mayor, and Democratic Registration, 1935	.67
Socialist Vote Mayor 1935, and Democratic Vote President 1936	.81
Democratic Vote Mayor 1935, and Democratic Vote President 1936	—.69

desirable to know the extent to which skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled workers (within the wage-earner group), white collar workers, small business men, and professional persons (especially teachers and ministers) lend their support in elections. Some of these groups conceal any clue to their voting sympathies which would ordinarily be revealed through open registration, membership, or active participation in the Socialist party. Voters in certain of these

[22] *Consumer Incomes in the U. S.: 1935-1936,* Washington, 1938, Table 9, p. 26.

groups may collectively wield a decisive influence in elections, though the same secrecy that prevents their open affiliation with the party would probably preclude any accurate interpretation of a direct question on voting support that might be asked in a poll of a representative sample of the voting population.

If we re-examine all of the Reading correlations (Tables 5-12) we can detect certain constant relationships or trends. Socialist support is characterized by a low degree of economic status, high degree of home ownership, and the absence of any significant endorsement on the basis of nativity. Republican support is characterized by high economic status, relatively low degree of home ownership in local elections, and a high degree of native white of native parentage support in presidential elections. Democratic support is characterized by the lack of any significant support on an economic basis prior to 1935 (when it began shifting from one extreme to another between local and national elections), low degree of home ownership, and a low degree of endorsement from native whites of native parentage.

In totality, based on the evidence revealed by these correlations, it may be said that the support for Socialist candidates was most exclusively a *class* vote, uncomplicated by factors of nativity. Republican support was also a class vote, but more closely associated with endorsement from native stock, particularly in presidential elections. Democratic support was most consistently *not* a class vote prior to 1935, though most consistently associated with a low degree of support from native whites of native parentage. This seems clearly to indicate that voting along class lines was demarcated most sharply between Socialist and Republican support during the decade of greatest Socialist influence prior to 1936. Thus in a city of unusual ethnic and cultural homogeneity, the Socialists achieved support for their program on a relatively pure class basis, cutting across even the foreign nativity lines that existed.

Contemporaneous with the growth of the socialist movement in Reading, the Socialist party also assumed a very active and influential role in the political life of two other cities—Milwaukee and Bridgeport. While each of these movements would merit an analysis comparable to that of Reading, no pretense is made here to introduce Milwaukee and Bridgeport data comparable in scope and

intensity to those for Reading. However, some data are at hand which suggest certain similarities and differences in the class character of the respective movements.

MILWAUKEE

The Socialist party in Wisconsin was led for many years by a veteran American Socialist—Victor L. Berger—who as early as 1904 polled 25 percent of the total Milwaukee vote for mayor, and in 1910 was elected as the first Socialist representative in the United States Congress. In 1910 when Reading very nearly elected a Socialist mayor, Emil Seidel was elected in Milwaukee where the Socialists controlled the administration for two years. In 1916 Daniel Hoan was elected mayor, under a non-partisan election law which permitted only two candidates to run for office in the general election. He was re-elected[23] until his defeat in 1940, thus serving as mayor of Milwaukee for 24 consecutive years. During that time, the city acquired a reputation for being well governed, and was also regarded as a "Socialist" city, though in fact the Socialists did not control the city administration as completely as they did in Reading from 1928 to 1932, and again from 1936 to 1940.

Skilled workers, as in Reading, have been the backbone of the Socialist party in Wisconsin, and its candidates for office have included machinists, painters, tool-makers, glass blowers, masons, plumbers, carpenters, and printers—chief representatives of the skilled trades; as well as lawyers, engineers, landscape architects, salesmen, and public servants—representing the professional-managerial-clerical occupations.[24]

For the purpose of determining the extent to which Milwaukee Socialist candidates received voting support from any specific economic classes of the population, we secured 1928 election data for selected offices and subjected it to correlation analysis, following the identical procedure used in handling the Reading data.[25] However, it was impossible to carry the analysis forward into the '30s, because about 1930 the total number of Milwaukee wards was increased and re-arranged, with the result that indices of economic status, based on the 25 wards enumerated by the Census Bureau in 1930, could not be correlated with the 27 wards that existed after that year. This was unfortunate for our study because it eliminated any demonstration of the extent to which voting along economic class lines might have increased or decreased during the depression decade. However, the correlation results for various elections in 1928, while limited in their scope, are interesting when compared with Reading data for 1927-28.

The low degree of correlation between economic status of the voters and their support for Hoan in both the Spring Primary and Spring Election of 1928 (Table 13) is in marked contrast with that of Reading, where in the Fall election of 1927, r=—.63 (Table 6) between economic status and the vote for the Socialist candidate for mayor. This would seem to give objective validity to the observation that Hoan was supported by voters, regardless of socio-economic status, because he gave Milwaukee an efficient municipal government. And recently, in reply to a question put to a responsible Milwaukee Socialist as to whether Hoan was voted for as a Socialist or as an efficient and honest mayor, the reply was forthcoming that he was elected because he was a "good administrator".[26] Also, the fact that Hoan usually ran ahead of other Socialist candidates[27] implied that he received the electoral support of a considerable proportion of voters from all socio-economic strata.

In the vote for city comptroller in the 1928 Spring election, the correlation with economic status is significant (r=—.46), and when we turn to the Fall election of that year, we find voting support for both Socialist and Republican candidates for sheriff more indicative of voting along economic class lines (Table 13). Similar to Reading, the Socialist candidate received the support of the lower economic groups (r=—.67); the Republican candidate was supported by the higher economic groups (r=.84); and the Democratic candidate received support from no particular economic group. The picture was essentially the same for the Presidential candidates,

[23]See table XXXII.
[24]Derived from correspondence with Frank P. Zeidler, Executive Secretary, Socialist Party of Wisconsin, July 15, 1940.
[25]See Chapter 5 above, and tables XXXI and XXXII.

[26]For his own description of the Socialist administration of Milwaukee, see Daniel W. Hoan, *City Government: The Record of the Milwaukee Experiment*, Harcourt, Brace and Co., New York, 1936.
[27]See note to table XXXII

with the exception that the Democratic vote for Smith was more indicative of support from the lower economic classes (r=—.49).

The support of Socialist candidates by home-owners was not nearly as decisive in Milwaukee as in Reading. For example, the highest correlation with home-ownership achieved by a Socialist

TABLE 13

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN PROPORTION OF VOTE FOR SELECTED CANDIDATES (1928) BY POLITICAL PARTIES, AND SELECTED VARIABLES (1930), MILWAUKEE

	Economic Score 1930	Homes Owned Percent 1930	Native White of Native Parentage Percent 1930
Mayor, 1928:			
Socialist (Hoan)—Spring Primary	—.13	.19	.06
Socialist (Hoan)—Spring Election	—.24	.34	—.01
Comptroller, 1928:			
Socialist—Spring Election	—.46	.26	—.19
Sheriff, 1928:			
Socialist—Fall Election	—.67	.47	—.44
Republican—Fall Election	.84	—.24	.72
Democrat—Fall Election	—.07	—.27	—.20
President, 1928:			
Socialist	—.64	.36	—.38
Republican	.73	.02	.76
Democrat	—.49	—.14	—.59

NOTE: These correlations are based on data for *25* wards. The significance of selected values of r according to their *P.E.*, and the t test are as follows:

r	*P.E.*	t	*P.*
.10	.13	.482	.7
.44	.11	2.350	.04
.51	.10	2.844	.01
.90	.03	9.902	

Thus all r values of .44 or more are significant according to the test for probable error (Chaddock, *Principles and Methods of Statistics*, p. 275) since they equal or exceed 4 times their *P.E.;* and all r values of .51 or more are significant according to the t test (Croxton and Cowden, *Applied General Statistics*, p. 875) since the probability is 1 or less in 100 that the correlations are due to chance.

candidate in Milwaukee was .47 (Table 13) whereas the coefficients ranged from .76 in the mayoralty election of 1927 to .68 in the Presidential election of 1928 in Reading (Tables 6, 7).

With respect to nativity, no significant correlations with the Socialist vote appeared in the spring elections, though the fall election

revealed a greater degree of foreign-born support for Socialist candidates, with the Republican candidates receiving support from native whites of native parentage (Table 13). None of the Reading correlations revealed any significant relationship, either positive or negative, between the vote for a Socialist candidate and nativity as measured by the percentage of native whites of native parentage.

All in all, the Milwaukee correlations (based on one year because the use of others was impracticable) revealed less consistent voting support for Socialist candidates on a socio-economic class basis—especially in mayoralty elections; less conclusive support on the basis of home ownership; and a greater tendency for support from persons outside of the native white of native parentage group. Comparatively, the outstanding difference between socio-economic support for Socialist candidates in Milwaukee and Reading in 1927-1928 was that *all* Socialist candidates, irrespective of office, received a definite socio-economic class endorsement in Reading, whereas endorsement of this type was manifested only in elections for county and Presidential offices, and *not* in the mayoralty election in Milwaukee.

BRIDGEPORT

Bridgeport is the third American city which has had a Socialist mayor or a Socialist controlled administration during the past decade. Similar to Reading and Milwaukee, its Socialist party dates back to the early 1900s, with a continuity in organization and leadership. Jasper McLevy, who was elected mayor of Bridgeport for the first time in 1933, had run for that office since 1911 when he polled about 25 percent of the total vote.[28] And as early as 1903, he polled 172 votes for the office of city clerk. Between 1911 and 1931, the Socialist party did not show a growth in strength comparable to that of the other two cities. For example, its mayoralty candidate polled only 6.5 percent of the vote in 1921, and only 5 percent in 1927. Bridge scandals connected with the non-Socialist administrations during the '20s probably contributed much to the voters' decision to lend support to the Socialist candidates early in the '30s. As in the case of Reading where the electorate's dissatisfaction with property assessments precipitated the election of the first Socialist mayor in 1927, so the voters of Bridgeport turned in

[28]See table XXX.

desperation to a party that was free from the traditional entanglements in the political and economic life of the community.

Also similar to the Reading and Milwaukee Socialist groups, was the skilled trades leadership of the Bridgeport party. McLevy had organized the Building Trades Council; had been at one time International President of the Slate and Tile Roofer's Union; and served as vice-president of the Connecticut Federation of Labor. The remainder of the party's leadership also was dominantly working class. An examination of the occupational composition of 20 Socialist officials, including the Board of Aldermen, 1935-36, reveals that 14, or 70 percent were workers in skilled trades, including those of machinist, carpenter, painter, slate roofer, brass roller, and pressman. The remainder were distributed among the professional, proprietary, clerical, and semiskilled worker groups.

After deriving indices of economic status for each of the city's districts or wards,[29] following the identical procedure used for the Reading and Milwaukee data, correlations were prepared comparable with those of the other two cities. Since Bridgeport has only 12 districts or wards for which Census data are tabulated, it was necessary to secure quite high coefficients of correlation before they could be interpreted as significant. However, the values of r listed in table 14 include a number that are sufficiently high to indicate significant degrees of association among certain variables.

In the mayoralty elections from 1927 to 1935, the only significant correlations with the economic score are revealed with respect to the Democratic candidate in 1927 (positive), and the Republican candidate in 1931 (positive). This probably signifies a transfer of higher economic class support from the Democratic candidate in 1927 to the Republican candidate in 1931. No significant economic status correlations appeared with respect to the Socialist candidate from 1927 to 1935. This probably implies that a sufficient number of voters from all economic classes supported the Socialist candidate, thereby blurring any clear-cut voting relationship along economic class lines such as occurred in Reading (Tables 6 and 14). The Presidential correlations with economic status in 1932 reveal a striking similarity with those of Reading in 1932, and with those of Milwaukee in 1928 (Tables 7, 13, 14). It seems that in all of

[29]See tables XXXIII and XXXIV.

these cities in the Presidential elections of 1928 or 1932 that the Socialists had definite lower economic class support; the Republicans, higher economic class support; and the Democrats a somewhat lesser degree of support from the lower economic groups. However, it must be reiterated that Reading differed from both

TABLE 14

CORRELATIONS BETWEEN PROPORTION OF VOTE FOR SELECTED CANDIDATES (1927-1935) BY POLITICAL PARTIES, AND SELECTED VARIABLES (1930), BRIDGEPORT

	Economic Score 1930	Homes Owned Percent 1930	Native White of Native Parentage Percent 1930
Mayor:			
Socialist:			
1927	—.46	.66	—.46
1931	—.30	.49	—.19
1935	—.30		
Republican:			
1927	—.48	—.66	—.56
1931	.78	—.16	.78
1935	.54		
Democrat:			
1927	.58	.45	.67
1931	—.28	—.56	—.53
1935	.15		
President, 1932:			
Socialist	—.68	0	—.71
Republican	.72	.41	.78
Democrat	—.46	—.43	—.52

NOTE: These correlations are based on data for *12* districts. The significance of selected values of r according to their *P.E.*, and the t test are as follows:

r	*P.E.*	t	*P.*
.10	.19	.318	.8
.55	.136	2.082	.03
.71	.10	3.188	.01
.80	.07	4.216	

Thus all r values of .55 or more are significant according to the test for probable error (Chaddock, *Principles and Methods of Statistics,* p. 275) since they equal or exceed 4 times their *P.E.;* and all r values of .71 or more are significant according to the t test (Croxton and Cowden, *Applied General Statistics,* p. 875) since the probability is 1 or less in 100 that the correlations are due to chance.

Milwaukee and Bridgeport in that its lower economic class support was consistent in *both* local and national elections.

With respect to home ownership, there was a positive relationship with the Socialist vote for mayor, and a negative relationship with the Republican vote in 1927. The Democratic vote in 1927

and 1931 demonstrated no consistent relationship with the economic score, home ownership, or nativity—indicating that the socio-economic character of Democratic voting support varied considerably between elections.

The correlations between nativity and voting indicated no constancy in Bridgeport mayoralty elections, though voting along these lines seemed more sharply drawn in the 1932 Presidential election (Table 14).

SUMMARY

On the basis of correlation analysis, the mass voting support for Socialist candidates—whether in local or national elections—in Reading was drawn consistently, and with increasing intensity during the years 1923-1936, from the lower socio-economic classes (Tables 6 and 7). This was in marked contrast with Milwaukee and Bridgeport, where neither the same consistency nor intensity were demonstrated in local elections, though tendencies similar to those of Reading were manifested in the national elections examined (Tables 13 and 14). In Reading, during this period, the mass voting support for Socialist candidates also came consistently from the home-owning class—probably small home-owners of which Reading has an unusually large percentage (Tables 6 and 7). A smiliar tendency was shown in Bridgeport in local elections (Table 14). In Reading, Socialist candidates were consistently supported irrespective of nativity lines as manifested by a lack of correlation between Socialist voting and native whites of native parentage (Tables 6 and 7). This was not true of the Republican and Democratic candidates in national elections where the former were heavily supported by the native group (Table 7). In Milwaukee and Bridgeport, correlations between Socialist vote and nativity were not significant in local elections, though in national elections native whites of native parentage predominated in support of the Republican candidates; support from other groups being more predominant for Socialist and Democratic candidates (Tables 13 and 14). This analysis, in general, points to the economic class nature of voting support given to Socialist candidates in Reading in *all* elections, whether local or national; whereas on the basis of the more limited data analyzed for Milwaukee and Bridgeport, the results suggest that economic class lines were not as sharply drawn in local as in national elections. In all three cities, economic class lines are uniformly indicated in Presidential elections.

Chapter 6

INTERPRETATION

The socialist movement in Reading encompasses roughly a time span of half a century. During the '90s it possessed little coherence and unity. Between 1900 and 1910 it achieved unity through the medium of the newly organized Socialist party and succeeded in electing a Representative to the State Assembly at the close of the decade. The next 25 years were marked by increasing growth and strength, culminating in the sweeping electoral victories of 1927 and 1935. Thereafter it went into a slow decline,[1] characterized by internal party disunity and an apparent loss of confidence among the mass of voters who had consistently supported the party. While frequent references have been made throughout this study to certain aspects of the movement's decline, our chief concern here is with the causal factors involved in its growth up to the year 1936.

As indicated in previous chapters, this phenomenon was a true social movement, especially because of its impact upon the totality of political and economic thought and action of the community. Whereas, on the one hand it could not be described as "revolutionary" in the sense that it sought modification of all social institutions; still, on the other hand, it was much more than a mere political movement. In microcosm, it achieved one of the goals of American socialists: the organization of the working classes for political action comparable to their organization for economic action. In fact, as we have frequently reiterated, this unity in the political and economic spheres was aptly demonstrated by the identity of leadership of both the Federated Trades Council and the Socialist party.

Whether its achievements as a movement were "radical" or not depends somewhat upon the ideological equipment of the person making the evaluation. At one extreme, a conservative member of the professional, proprietary, or managerial classes in Reading would, at certain times during the evolution of the movement, have undoubtedly looked upon it as a revolutionary attempt to under-

[1]See tables XIII and XV.

mine the community's most fundamental institutions. At the other extreme, a Communist party member—of which there were a few in the city—would have regarded it as a mere surface-scratching attempt at social reform; lacking much significance when considered in the light of "true" socialist goals. The validity of these, as well as any other points of view concerning Reading socialism can be demonstrated or refuted in the light of the evidence and analysis introduced in this study.

There is no question that the working classes in Reading were aroused to a consciousness of their true political and economic interests, through the activity of the Socialist party. While most other American cities had their trades-union federations during this period, there were few in which organized labor so widened the scope of its activities as to seek direct political representation for the working classes; few in which a continuous and consistent program of integrated economic and political action achieved the strength which it did in Reading. Whereas "Socialism in Our Times" was not realized in Reading, the movement at least demonstrated that the working classes possessed the ability to engineer a *means* for achieving their goals *within* the framework of a democratic society. That these goals were not, or could not be, achieved resulted from a combination of circumstances—some within the control of the local leadership group and others beyond its control in the larger American culture.

The fact that the working class appeal of the socialist program found its mark in Reading is demonstrated by the consistent, and ever increasing intensity of support, which the party received from the lower economic groups. Whether we correlate voting with economic status in local, congressional, or national elections during the years 1925-1935, we find a significant relationship which existed *prior* to the 1929 depression, and increased in intensity up to the time of the Party split. A similar relationship was evident in Milwaukee and Bridgeport only in national elections. The crucial fact to recognize is that while Roosevelt and the New Deal leadership eventually did attract a heavy lower economic class vote, the Reading socialists had solidified this type of class support in a period of prosperity when voting, as well as thinking along class lines, was not sharply drawn elsewhere.

Another fact that stands out clearly among all three socialist cities is the basic "right-wing" position of the dominant party leadership. When the national leadership of the Socialist party showed a willingness to form a united front with other Marxian parties in the middle '30s, the local leadership in these cities rebelled. In Reading, Maurer issued a statement on June 25, 1936, in which he said:

> "I sincerely hope that the Socialists of Pennsylvania will demonstrate that they stand four-square for Democracy inside as well as outside the party—that they are Socialists and *not Communists*—that they will take such action at the next State Convention as will prove to the world that Social Democracy is not dead in Pennsylvania—and I shall be ashamed if Berks County Socialists are not in the forefront fighting to hold high the ideals and principles of the International Socialist Movement."

On July 7 he resigned from the party.[2] In Bridgeport, Jasper McLevy subsequently became head of the Social Democratic Federation—a group of right-wing socialists organized in opposition to the Thomas faction which had retained the name of the Socialist party.

In seeking a causal explanation of the movement we must answer two fundamental questions, one involving a time element and the other a place element. The first involves a comparison between the total situation *before* and *after* the emergence of the movement: what new factors were present after the emergence of the movement which were not there previously? The second involves a comparison between communities having certain characteristics in common with Reading: what factors were there in the total situation that differed fundamentally from those of other comparable American cities?[3]

For analytical purposes, we have divided these factors, which we consider causally related to the movement, into two groups. First: *conditional* factors which though basically essential would not necessarily by themselves have precipitated the movement. Second: *dynamic* factors which were immediately essential, and without which the movement could not conceivably have developed. Both sets of factors are important, but as we must recognize, the condi-

[2] *New York Times,* July 8, 1936.
[3] See tables I-XXVIII for comparative data.

tional factors were present in many communities where no socialist movement of any consequence developed. However, when these conditional factors coexist and become fused with the dynamic factors, a social phenomenon, of the type under consideration, develops. We shall also consider a third set of factors which have been mentioned in other studies as of causal significance in radical movements but which seemed relatively unimportant in Reading.

CONDITIONAL FACTORS

Industrial and Occupational

Reading was industrially diversified—in common with many other American cities—both before and after the emergence of the socialist group. This diversified manufacturing required the services of many types of skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled labor. The skilled and semiskilled workers were already well organized in craft unions in the '90s,[4] and it was in their union councils of cigar-makers, steamfitters, machinists, building trades workers, railroad workers, etc., that the seeds of socialism found their most fertile ground.

The chief industrial change that appeared after 1900 was the introduction of the full-fashioned silk hosiery industry—which in turn made for the emergence of an additional specialized group of skilled and semiskilled workers. Two chief reasons, however, prevented any effective unionization of these workers until the middle '30s. First, during the years of greatest expansion in the industry (roughly from 1910 to 1925) it was possible for unsuccessful strikers to secure capital and set themselves up as hosiery manufacturers. Without this opportunity for vertical mobility, it seems quite possible that frustrated hosiery strikers would have redoubled their energies in the direction of effective union organization, attempting thereby to improve their economic position as workers *on a class basis,* rather than as entrepreneurs *on an individual basis.* Instead, the high wages of the '20s coupled with opportunities to set up new factories accounted to some extent for the fact that very little of the socialist leadership prior to the '30s was drawn from the hosiery worker group. However in the following decade when open class conflict appeared in that industry, a mutuality of interest developed

[4]In 1900, six thousand of the city's workers were members of labor unions. See Lozo, *op. cit.,* p. 56.

between the hosiery worker group and the older, more established, socialist-trade union group.[5] The second factor that prevented effective hosiery union organization prior to the '30s was the bitter opposition of hosiery manufacturers to the unionization of their plants; a situation that was later partially modified through the position taken by the New Deal administration.

Thus it would seem apparent that a basic condition for class action exists when industries become stabilized and employ large numbers of workers who can entertain little hope of improving their economic position through becoming owners or entrepreneurs. However, the insufficiency of this condition *by itself* to precipitate a concerted class movement is reflected in comparisons, made elsewhere in this study, with other American cities of similar industrial composition and diversification wherein no similar movement emerged.

Economic

Our own data, coupled with those of other researches, indicate that Reading is an "average" American city from the standpoint of the economic position of its population. Thorndike, in his study of 307 cities having a population of 30,000 or more, discovered that Reading ranked slightly below the median of the entire group in "general goodness"—a composite "G" score based on 37 comparative items tabulated for each city (health, education, recreation, economic, etc.).[6] These "G" scores in the 307 cities ranged from a high of 62 in Pasadena to a low of 17 in certain Southern cities. Reading's score was 38, and the range of all the cities compared in our study[7] was from 31 in New England textile centers to 44 in Milwaukee. These "G" scores seem significant with respect to the relative economic positions of the various cities because of their high correlation with median rentals.[8] Since Reading and the other

[5]See chapter 4.
[6]Thorndike, E. L., *Your City,* Harcourt, Brace, New York, 1939.
[7]See table I.
[8]Thorndike contends that his "G" scores measure the relative positions of the 307 cities with respect to the "goodness of life", which appears highest in cities such as Pasadena, Montclair, Cleveland Heights, Berkeley, Brookline, Evanston, Oak Park, and lowest in Southern cities such as Savannah, Durham, Augusta, Columbus (Ga.) and Charleston. He says (p. 62, *op. cit.*) that the "goodness of life" in a city is explainable only in part (about one-fourth) by wealth and income. We find it difficult, however, to agree with his evaluation

Socialist cities are "average", and we do not find comparable Socialist or other radical movements in cities where the average citizen lives on a much lower economic plane of life, it seems doubtful whether the economic factor, as measured by these indices, can be ascribed causal importance *as such.*

Lundberg, on the basis of a comparative study of ten radical and ten conservative counties in North Dakota, concluded that social and economic insecurity was one of the conditions that produced a radical.[9] He stated that his conclusions "coincide with and support the generalizations of other more general studies on the subject of radicalism and conservatism".[10] In totality, Reading is not an economically depressed community; and while socialist candidates for public office received their chief support from its lower economic classes—indicated in the highly significant correlations demonstrating that relationship (Tables 6, 7 and 9)—it is extremely difficult to assess the causal importance of the economic factor. Whether the lower economic groups develop any class-consciousness seems to depend on some additional dynamic element which is not described with sufficient scientific accuracy in the term "economic factor".

The ownership of industry in Reading, in the main, cannot be characterized as absentee. While we cannot speak with accuracy with respect to the degree of absentee ownership in the metals and metal products industry, the fact remains that ownership in the chief industry—hosiery manufacturing—was largely in the hands of the entrepreneurs (or their families) who had established these in-

of the importance of the economic factor because we correlated his "G" scores with the 1930 median rentals of the 307 cities and secured a coefficient of .739±.017. This would seem to indicate that the 37 items which went into the composite "G" score are to a considerable extent a reflection of the economic plane of life of the average citizen in each of the cities. Thus we find that wealthy suburban cities have the highest average, and that Southern cities with large Negro populations have the lowest average. Assuming that our inference, on the basis of the high correlation coefficient, is correct—Reading and the other Socialist cities, as well as the additional cities selected for comparison in our study, differ very little in the average economic position of their populations.

[9]Lundberg, George A., "The Demographic and Economic Basis of Political Radicalism and Conservatism", *American Journal of Sociology,* March, 1927, pp. 719-732. The counties were classified as radical or conservative on the basis of their political support of, or opposition to, the farmers' organization known as the Non-Partisan League, in the elections of 1916-1922.

[10]*Ibid.,* p. 731.

dustries. Most of them lived either in the city or the metropolitan area. The founders and owners of the great Wyomissing industries, who played an important role in the area of class conflict, live in the residential suburbs at no great distance from their plants. They have been noted in a paternalistic way for their sense of civic consciousness manifested in their philanthropic contributions to hospitals, libraries, art museums; the establishment of a technical school; the establishment of an educational foundation; the maintenance of model industrial plants; and great pride in the development of the suburban residential areas in which they lived. Unlike the absentee ownership so characteristic of some corporately owned industries in other communities, they perhaps served as a living symbol of upper class domination to Reading's class-conscious Socialists and trade-unionists. The latter resented paternalism—no matter what benefits it bestowed through the medium of philanthropies—seeking rather the extension of democratic control over both the political and economic aspects of their lives.

Another economic factor that cannot be lost sight of is manifested in the consistent correlation between home ownership and socialist voting support. Earlier we indicated that this might have resulted at least in part from the association between home ownership and low land values. It is nevertheless revealing that the *fact* of ownership itself did not serve as an obstacle to the endorsement of Reading socialists, in either local or national elections. Perhaps the rank and file of socialists became alert, through the medium of the educational and propagandistic program of the party, to the fact that they had more to gain through the politico-economic leadership of the socialists than through lending support to other political parties that were traditionally committed to the protection of property rights. Apparently the mantle of conservatism did not descend upon the rank and file of the electorate because of their investiture with title deeds.

Nativity

The predominantly native white of native parentage composition of the party's leadership, as well as of the electorate that supported it, may at first glance seem paradoxical—in relation to a *socialistic* movement in America—but may in fact be one of its chief sources

of strength. Two authoritative historians of the labor movement in the United States wrote[11] as late as 1935 that

> "American labor still remains the most heterogeneous labor class in existence—ethnically, linguistically, religiously, and culturally—although the restriction of immigration will in time make it more homogeneous. With the working class of such composition, to have made Socialism or Communism the official 'ism' of the movement, would have meant, even if other conditions permitted it, deliberately driving away many of the Catholics, with whom an irreconcilable opposition to Socialism is a matter of religious principle. . . ."

The existence of racial and cultural elements cutting across and dividing the working classes was reduced virtually to a minimum in a highly industrialized city of the size of Reading—a fact which probably made possible the predominant socio-economic nature of the movement as measured by occupational and economic indices.[12] On the other hand, Perlman and Taft's observation with respect to the nature of Catholic opposition is not wholly substantiated in either Reading, Milwaukee, or Bridgeport. The Reading socialists received active support from both Polish and Italian groups in the 1935 election, although any concerted Catholic opposition would not have meant defeat since slightly less than one-third of Reading's church members are Roman Catholic. However, both Milwaukee and Bridgeport are predominantly Catholic cities, and yet their respective Socialist parties received the support of at least a sizeable proportion of the Catholic group, as indicated by the percentages of votes cast for socialist candidates.[13] In fact, three of the 16 members of the Socialist Board of Aldermen in Bridgeport in 1935-36 were Roman Catholics. And while a member of the Wisconsin party wrote to the author that "Catholics are the implacable foes of the socialists", his statement probably applied more to the leadership groups than to the voting population inasmuch as Hoan, the Socialist candidate for mayor, polled 63 percent of the total vote in 1932 in a population whose church membership was 53 percent Roman Catholic.

[11]Perlman, Selig, and Taft, Philip, *History of Labor in the United States*, 1896-1932, Macmillan, New York, 1935, Vol. 4, p. 622. By permission of the Macmillan Company, publishers.
[12]Chapters 4 and 5.
[13]See tables XXIV and XXVI.

The leaders of the Reading Socialist party were not only native American but also largely of Pennsylvania-German descent. Since the latter group is ethnically dominant in the community, the hazard of having "outsiders" attempt to superimpose an alien "ism" upon them was avoided. It does seem apparent, however, on the basis of the lack of any significant correlation between nativity and Socialist voting (Tables 6 and 7) that the socialists were neither supported nor opposed, during the years of the movement's greatest strength, on the basis of origin of either the native or foreign born groups. Cleavages between leadership groups, or their respective electoral supporters, followed class lines predominantly.

We consider this native white of native parentage dominance in the community as a conditional factor, however, because there are other American communities which either meet comparable ethnic specifications but lack much receptivity to socialist programs, or are ethnically heterogeneous and support Socialist parties. It is important, though, to bear in mind that Reading's ethnic homogeneity eliminated one of the chief obstacles that for years hindered the working classes in America from achieving unity of political and economic action.

DYNAMIC FACTORS

The process whereby a class-aligned socialist movement was precipitated through the interplay of certain dynamic elements with the conditional factors of industrial, occupational, economic, and nativity composition of the community, constitutes the essence of any possible causal interpretation of this phenomenon. It would be presumptuous to attempt any quantitative evaluation of the relative influence of any one factor; rather, it is their juxtaposition in a total situation that resulted in "something new being added". In fact, our analytical distinction between *conditional* and *dynamic* factors is not designed as much to give priority to any particular set of factors, as it is to sift out the elements which were most immediately responsible for the change. For example, the conditional factors could be multiplied *ad infinitum* to include peculiarities of topography, climate, etc., which made the existence of the community possible, but which would not necessarily have any direct causal bearing upon the development of a socialist movement.

Hence, with our selected and limited set of conditions in mind, we now turn to the most immediate, dynamic elements.

Ideology

From the publication of the *Communist Manifesto* very nearly a century ago, Marxian ideas in a variety of forms have served as blueprints for social reorganization and as a stimulus to action for many revolutionary or reform groups. These ideas were introduced into Reading in the '80s and '90s and the form which they ultimately assumed in the national Socialist party platform of 1901[14] provided the set of slogans, symbols, and ideas whereby the working classes in Reading were rallied to the socialist cause. Whether any reasonably profound understanding of these principles ever extended beyond the leadership group is both problematical and immaterial. Instead, what is important is that they were reiterated and constantly used by the leaders as a focal point for recruiting the masses in support of a political party representing the working classes. The same set of principles was introduced into other American, industrialized communities, but in very few of them, did they gain the foothold they did in Reading; very few where they served to mold the political and economic thought of the community along class lines. That this was accomplished in Reading was due not so much to the logic or "inevitability" of operation of principles, as it was to the manner in which they were interpreted to the rank and file.

Leadership

The role of this element, whether personified in a few key individuals or represented by a class-oriented leadership group, was indispensable to the unity and coherence of the movement. Around 1900 when James Maurer, Andrew Bower, and a few others became converted to the socialist cause, they proceeded to interpret these principles in the light of local conditions and in a manner designed to make them *understandable* to the average Pennsylvania-German workman. James Maurer, and most of his colleagues, were Pennsylvania-Germans and were conversant with the prejudices, the "stubbornness", the virtues, and the weaknesses of this group. Although they did not have to contend with a heterogeneous bloc of immigrant labor, they did not commit the fatal error of showering abstract principles and hair-splitting distinctions upon the class to which their appeal was directed. About 1929, in a discussion of radical tactics,[15] Maurer wrote:

> "I don't speak like a polished scholar. I do, however, try to express my thoughts in a common-sense way. If you are going to get ready for the revolution which the modern industrial system makes inevitable, you will have to stop splitting hairs and talking about the mysteries of the nebular hypothesis. Instead talk to each other about issues at hand in an understandable fashion and, above all, be tolerant. Corral every toiler whether he works with his hand or brain under one banner. That is power, and power means success."

They were keenly aware that one of the prerequisites for working toward their conception of a socialist commonwealth was to secure an electoral following that would provide a counterpart in the political sphere for economic action through the trades unions. Convinced of the essential soundness of the socialist point of view, they used its cliches as a means for molding a politically unified working class group.

Though Maurer had little formal education, his record of activities in the socialist and trade union movements, and in many spheres of endeavor which he considered closely allied to the advancement of working class interests, reflected a degree of self discipline and education in political, economic, and social-psychological matters that might serve as a model for those who seek such knowledge through the channels of formal education. Elsewhere we have made frequent references to his varied interests locally, nationally, and internationally.[16] In addition, he recognized the economic importance of one of the most controversial problems in America in addresses he delivered on "A Worker's View of Birth Control"[17] before the First Annual Conference on Birth Control, in New York in 1921; and on "The Economic Necessity of Birth Control for Work-

[14]See chapter 3.

[15]Laidler, Harry W., and Thomas, Norman, *The Socialism of Our Times*, Vanguard Press, New York, 1929, chapter 10, pp. 152-153.

[16]See chapters 2, 3, and 4.

[17]Printed as an appendix to Maurer's autobiography, *op. cit.*, pp. 358-366.

ers"[18] before the Pennsylvania Birth Control Federation in Philadelphia in 1927.

With the possible exception of the two Socialists who represented the city in the State Assembly in the '30s,—one of whom, Darlington Hoopes, was a lawyer—the party leaders were overwhelmingly from the working class. While the unskilled worker class was scarcely represented in this leadership, the dominance of the skilled and semi-skilled worker group reflected a transference of political power from the professional-proprietary-managerial group. Their record in office demonstrated the capacity of this group to administer a municipal government. The educated and professional classes contributed very little in the way of socialist leadership. Members of these classes usually have the training and intelligence to recognize the socio-economic problems of the working classes, but their role in class leadership is generally neutralized for either economic or cultural reasons. Lawyers, who were the predominant professional class representatives in the opposition parties, were aware that more successful careers could be carved out for themselves through an alliance with the business and industrial classes. Ministers and teachers usually cannot openly participate in political or trade union activities because of group pressure against "meddling", or otherwise exercising influence upon others, in "controversial" matters, which in fact usually concern the sources of political and economic conflict within the community. If they venture along such paths it is generally (though with important exceptions) in the direction of exercising influence in support of the status quo; the alternative being a threat to their source of livelihood. Alliance with the Socialist party might insure income protection in political jobs, but certainly would endanger positions where the source of income was controlled by the industrial and business groups. Open voicing of preferences for either Republican or Democratic candidates might be acceptable because of the "good-natured" rivalry between these groups, neither of which (prior to the New Deal) differed very much on the fundamental socio-economic issues which faced the community. However, an open expression of preference for the Socialist group could not be regarded

[18] *Reading Eagle,* Nov. 16, 1927.

so light-heartedly by business and industrial leaders, because of its potential threat to their own vested interests. Unlike the professional classes, members of the working classes are not faced with such a dilemma when they openly participate in socialist activities, providing that they have a back-log of economic security through the medium of *effective trade union organization.*

Another element that characterized socialist leadership, and which was very important to the success of the movement, was the extent to which its leaders remained faithful to the interests of their class. In the past it has been relatively easy for potential working class leaders to ascend the economic scale and identify themselves with another socio-economic class. Whether the Reading socialist leaders could have done this or not, the fact remains that the socialist-working class leadership remained constant and thereby provided an indispensable continuity for the aims and activities of the movement.

Organization

Organization which *fused* the political and economic activities of the working classes through the identity of leadership of the Socialist party and the Federated Trades Council was also indispensable to the success of the movement. Either, without the other, would have resulted in a situation similar to that found in non-socialist cities: A Socialist party polling one or two percent of the vote, or a Central Trades Council confining itself to economic action and leaving political leadership largely in the hands of non-working class representatives. Without passing judgment upon the merits of extending working class action to the political sphere, it is certain that the socialist movement in Reading owed a great deal of its success to the mutual confidence of socialists and organized labor.

In a culture where organization is so essential to furthering the interests of any group, the opposition of the employing class to employee organization—whether political or economic—reflects one of the deep paradoxes of such a culture. Despite the fact that business and industry have always recognized the value of collective action, through trade associations, chambers of commerce, and similar organizations, a comparable attempt at organization by the working classes was only too frequently regarded as having a sinister,

and un-American quality. While the individualistic tradition had some real basis in fact in the case of both employers and employees in the earlier artisan era prior to the emergence of large scale industry, the values inherent in collective action had long ago been recognized among employer groups, whether through economic organization or its counterpart in alliances with one of the traditional political parties. It was this counter-organization of another class that they feared more than any departure from American ways—though the latter provided a convenient rationalization.

An editorial which appeared in the *Reading Times*[19] at the height of the great general strike in the hosiery industry in 1933, recognized the validity and fairness of this counter-organization of the working classes:

> "The hosiery manufacturers of Berks County, in common with the rest of the industry, are meeting in New York City. They are there acting as a unit to formulate a code regulating their industry which will be acceptable to them. In presenting their code to the government they will also present a solid front. They will bargain collectively with the government for every item.
>
> "While this meeting is being held in New York, 10,000 men and women, hosiery workers in Berks county, are walking the streets without employment and wages. . . .
>
> "The reason for the strike is that the hosiery workers have asked for the same privilege as the manufacturers have of acting as a unit in consummating arrangements whereby the best interests of their entire number shall be served. They are asking for the right of bargaining collectively. They are asking for the same right that the manufacturers have to present a solid front wherever their interests are in the balance, both in Berks and in Washington. . . ."

Parallel to the economic organization of the working classes in Reading, was the closely knit organization of the Socialist party. In fact, in the political sphere, the working classes had an organization which was in many respects superior to that of either the Republican or Democratic parties. Functioning continuously, even between elections, and making generous use of many devices to develop *esprit de corps,* it was ever present as a working class front in opposition to the two chief groups that in essence gave some

[19]July 12, 1933.

continuity to the opposition parties—(a) the propertied, employing class, and (b) the career politicians. While the Socialist leadership group was accused—even by the left-wingers who broke away in 1936—of exercising dictatorial control over party policies, some group capable of making decisions was indispensable. As early as 1886, Montgomery,[20] in a discussion of the political clubs of the Democratic and Republican parties, said:

> "Clubs are not so much for discussion as for organization to develop party strength. Discussion is carried on mostly by the leaders of the respective parties, and clubs gather in followers. *The real, earnest political thinking in each party is done and published by comparatively few individuals* (italics ours)."

Furthermore, the socialist leaders were always subject to the control of the party caucus, and even if that body is considered a relatively small working class representation, the leaders had to submit themselves to the will of the electorate through the medium of the secret ballot.

However, apart from any charges and counter-charges of dictatorial party leadership which to some degree characterized *all* parties, a genuine *net gain* was realized by the working classes through the Socialist organization. It provided the electorate with *real* alternatives. They could make a choice between working class candidates, on the one hand, and the usual professional-proprietary-managerial-clerical offerings of the traditional parties. Thus the working classes, who obviously constitute a majority of the population, could select a candidate of their own class instead of candidates from other economic and occupational strata. In effect, the Socialist organization provided a means for the *transfer* of power from one class group to another, rather than the *substitution* of a class for a non-class government, which was popularly assumed to be the case.

Education and Propaganda

A community's educational institutions, as well as its newspapers, usually reflect the point of view of the dominant interests. Generalizing in this respect, Wolfe writes:[21]

[20]*History of Berks County in Pennsylvania,* p. 483.

[21]Wolfe, A. B., *Radicalism, Conservatism, and Scientific Method,* Macmillan, New York, 1923, p. 184.

". . . the conservatives . . . commonly have control of most of our educational resources, including not only the public schools but boards and faculties of the institutions of higher learning, and the press and publishing business. Against these controls, liberal and radical bring to bear (a) the general propaganda resources—oral and printed—at their disposal, (b) the radical presss, including some few publishing houses which accept, if they do not specialize in, radical matter which other companies avoid, and (c) the project now gaining headway, of workers' education through 'trade union colleges' and 'workers' universities. . . ."

Reading was no exception in this respect, and the socialists had to build from the foundation, channels of communication that would convey their point of view to the rank and file. At first, they resorted to oral propaganda through the medium of street corner meetings that were held so frequently during the earlier years of the movement. Later, the socialists acquired their own printing plant, and also began to publish a weekly newspaper—the *Labor Advocate*. Many of the articles that appeared in the *Advocate* were also circularized in the *Pioneer,* a propaganda leaflet distributed periodically from house to house. Although the daily press did report some of the activities of the socialists, the coverage only became reasonably complete *after* 1927 when the socialists came into control of the city administration. Thereafter, the daily press had to adopt a more conciliatory attitude because of the serious threat to circulation, if socialist supporters—who then constituted almost 50 percent of the electorate—should attempt a boycott. In fact, during the '30s, a morning newspaper frequently supported socialist candidates, and did adopt a somewhat pro-labor policy as reflected in the editorial quoted earlier in this chapter. However, if the socialists had had to depend upon the daily press to convey their message (apart from paid advertisements) prior to 1927, few of the electorate would have been well informed.

In the earlier years, the local socialists had to import most of their propaganda literature; later, they printed much of it themselves, and distributed it free or at a nominal cost. It is important to recognize that the socialists not only built up their own media of mass communication, but they geared the *content* of this propaganda to the level of the masses to which the appeal was directed.

This technique is summarized in a discussion of radical tactics prepared by James Maurer:[22]

". . . go before the American people and talk to them so they know what you are talking about. Don't forget that. Some of you highbrows think that I am trying to be funny when I say that, but I am a worker and came from a family that was very poor and I never knew what the alphabet meant until I was nearly sixteen. I live among working people and I have spent the greater part of my life among them. I am part of them. I am going to stay with them and I know how much we understand of what the average man or woman says or writes. You have got to present the socialist message in simple direct language. The workers are all right if they understand what you mean. If we can educate them, have study classes with good literature —not the kind of long drawn out articles we see in the average labor paper—we will win them. . . ."

Although Maurer's writings reflect a bias against "intellectualism" in almost any form, he probably felt most keenly that teachers represented non-working class interests. Thus in an article on "Labor's Demand for Its Own Schools"[23] he writes:

"Workingmen have also observed the snobbishness of the average school teacher. If she shows any sympathy for workingmen and their families, it is the condescending sympathy that is worse than contempt. She herself is not a working woman but a 'professional' woman, her starvation wages notwithstanding. . . . Her male colleagues, up in the high school, and the principals and superintendent are even worse snobs than she, for they are trying to hobnob with members of the chamber of commerce, rotary clubs, and similar organizations."

Apart from Maurer's active participation in the labor college movement, generally, the local socialists did establish a labor "college" during the '30s which offered evening school courses for workers in economics, history, trade union organization, and related fields.

All of these propaganda and educational activities, initiated by socialists and oriented to the working classes; based on a socialist ideology coupled with adequate leadership and organization; were indispensable to the success of the movement.

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[22]Laidler and Thomas, *op. cit.,* p. 151.
[23]*Nation,* Sept. 20, 1922, pp. 276-278.

Adaptation to Traditional Culture

The socialists skillfully adapted their program to the traditional culture of the Pennsylvania-Germans. While the socialist leadership had a reasonably well-defined conception of the points on which their program departed from the prevailing institutional controls in the political and economic spheres, they also were keenly aware that they were dealing with a group of human beings who had inherited a set of cultural values that did not necessarily need to be destroyed in the interest of working toward socialist goals. The Pennsylvania-Germans are a sociable people and employ any pretext for getting together at picnics, suppers, and other "socials", whether it be through media of the church, the lodge, the volunteer fire company, or the family reunion. Thus it was of the utmost strategic value that these gregarious propensities should be utilized for winning converts to the socialist cause. Men who ordinarily would have spent their evenings at church, fire company, or lodge meetings, could find social equivalents in the Socialist branch, or trade-union meetings. Women could find in the wide variety of Socialist party activities, the counterpart of "auxiliary" endeavors that would otherwise have commanded their attention. A picnic at the Socialist park in July, 1933, typified this activity:[24]

> "Pioneer Socialist women of Reading and Berks County were honored Sunday at a picnic held at the Socialist Park . . . more than 8,000 men, women, and children attended the affair which was arranged and staged solely by women. . . . Fifty women, charter members of the Socialist Women's Educational League which was organized in 1903, were present. . . . A Douglass fir tree, planted near the entrance of the park was dedicated in honor of these women. . . .
>
> "At 2 o'clock, a mass meeting was held, with Mrs. Esther Friedman, teacher in the Rand School of Social Science . . . and Miss Myrtle Seidel, a member of the local Young Peoples' Socialist League as speakers. . . . A Program of entertainment was staged . . . including a comedy skit; and an international pageant stressing international brotherhood and goodwill, was presented by women in the costumes of the nationalities they represented.
>
> "Other entertainment featured the afternoon program, including a cake-walk and a concert by the Socialist band. . . . The evening program included songs by the Socialist Women's Chorus . . . an exhibition drill by the Workers' Gymnastic Alliance, a children's minstrel by members of the Junior Young People's Socialist League, and free public dancing."

[24] *Reading Eagle,* July 31, 1933.

The socialists recognized that the transition from one set of institutional values to another would be facilitated by utilizing media which had a touch of the "familiar" to the persons involved.

During the '30s, the movement itself became institutionalized to the extent that party pioneers gathered for annual reunions. Thus by 1939 we find that:[25]

> ". . . old time Socialists to the number of 160 from all parts of Reading flocked to the Marion Beneficial Hall last night for their sixth annual reunion. . . .
>
> "Many of the speeches and informal remarks were in Pennsylvania German, and shouts of laughter and roars of approval met the dialect stories told by County Commissioner Amos N. Lesher. . . .
>
> "A feature of other reunions, some of the minutes of the old Thirteenth ward branch were again read. . . . They dated back to 1902, when even the most enthusiastic Socialists here did not dream of a gathering at which the mayor of the city, a majority of the councilmen, a county commissioner and numerous other public officials could assemble and reaffirm their allegiance to the Socialist Party."

While these reunions had begun during the years when the socialist movement was at its height, they were in a way probably symptomatic of its future decline. Veterans who gather to relive former battles usually lack the initiative or aptitude to engage in new struggles. In fact, a number of the younger idealists, who might have furnished a rejuvenated spearhead of attack, turned elsewhere for an outlet for their energies after the 1936 split, and though the rift became partly healed later, the disunity of those years did much to sap the vitality of the movement.

DOUBTFUL FACTORS

"A New and Undeveloped Community"

There are a number of factors that are not infrequently included as conditions conducive to the development of radical movements.

[25] *Reading Times,* Jan. 14, 1939.

For example, Lundberg concluded that the conditions producing a radical are "mostly likely to be true in a new and relatively undeveloped community."[26] While it was applicable in his specific study, a total situation of the opposite nature prevailed in Reading. There we find a class movement of a relatively radical nature developing *within* a community that was noteworthy for its stability, predominance of "old stock", and an advanced state of industrial development. The "average" person was integrated in a social milieu characterized by common bonds of language, religion, and custom. Home ownership was the rule rather than the exception, and while the more economically insecure did rally to the socialist banner, they were not motivated by economic degradation or despair comparable to that of the working classes in certain other American communities.

"Outside Agitation"

While the socialist ideology was born far afield (for which due causal credit must be given) it is significant that once it was transferred to a few local persons during the '90s, the "radical agitation" in its favor was carried on from *within* the community. A few outsiders did join the party, particularly in its later years, but only after it had been firmly established by a local trades union group.

"Germanic Heritage"

A possible causal factor of definitely intriguing but unsupported dimensions is implicit in the Germanic heritage of Reading's dominant ethnic stock. It is plausible, especially in the light of the Germanic influence found in the two other American cities having dominant Socialist parties in recent years. But as we indicated earlier,[27] the comparative recency of migration of Milwaukee's Germanic stock meant that they could have brought with them a knowledge of, and belief in, socialist principles. Even in Bridgeport, the party was predominantly German in its earlier years—in fact the minutes of its early business meetings were written in German.[28] In the case of Reading, however, the great majority of

[26]*Op. cit.*, p. 732.
[27]See chapter 1.
[28]Interview with Frederick Schwartzkopf, Socialist City Clerk of Bridgeport, March, 1936.

original German immigrants had arrived during the century *prior* to the emergence of Marxian socialism in Europe. Furthermore, these immigrants, being largely of relatively illiterate rural origin, soon lost contact not only with their relatives in Germany but also with the future cultural development of that country.

We are not aware of any scientific evidence which would indicate that there is anything in the biological inheritance of Germanic peoples making them receptive to socialist ideas, whether of the "Social-Democratic", "Communistic", or "Nazi" varieties.[29] Hence, when coupled with the lack of any significant cultural contacts between the older Pennsylvania-German stock and the mother country, the "Germanic heritage" factor in the Reading situation seems to be a coincidence, rather than a verifiable causal element in the light of available evidence.

CONCLUSION

The Reading socialist movement—relatively radical and class aligned—might, in essence, be said to have resulted from the transfer of certain Marxian concepts to a local group of inspired and conscientious leaders, who, supported by a continuous organization and a well integrated educational and propagandist program, directed these ideas or principles toward receptive socio-economic groups in a milieu conditioned by favorable industrial, economic, and cultural factors.

During the period covered in this study from 1896 to 1936, class conflict in Reading paralleled that found in other American industrial communities. The chief differences, however, were first, the fact that class interests were not as blurred by heterogeneous racial and cultural differences; and second, the working classes supported *both* political and economic organization under virtually identical leadership as means for developing class-consciousness and implementing class action. In the sense that net gains of both a material and psychological nature were derived, there was real justification for James H. Maurer using the title "It Can Be Done" in writing his

[29]A Wisconsin Socialist, when informed of the Pennsylvania-Germanic character of Reading, said in a letter to the author, "It has been my theory that the Teutonic mind shows a peculiar emotional tendency to apprehend and endeavor to hypostatize the Socialist principle. The idea of organizing all society on a master plan and reducing every operation of it to a ruling Ordnung, seems to be a tropism in most German minds."

autobiography. This, despite the fact that the program fell far short of achieving the "coöperative commonwealth". In addition, the fact that many of the socio-economic reforms advocated decades ago by the socialists were eventually incorporated into the New Deal social legislation of the '30s should be regarded as a vindication of the essential soundness of these principles. Some may regard the relatively slow evolutionary approach of the socialists as their fundamental weakness; yet it may be justifiably regarded as their chief strength because of their faith in democratic means for the eventual realization of their aims. It would be highly speculative to assess their future role, because since 1936 the waning strength of the Reading movement was the result of at least three causes: first, the split in the ranks of the national Socialist party; second, the social legislative program of the New Deal; and third, the more recent war emergency. But whatever proportions the movement may assume in the future, the fact still remains that the Reading Socialists demonstrated that class action, under working class leadership, was possible within the democratic framework of American culture.

Appendix 1

METHOD

With the socialist movement from 1896 to 1936 in Reading, Pennsylvania, serving as the focus of interest, we have sought to answer two fundamental questions:

First—What factors accounted for its development in a native-American environment?

Second—Did it precipitate social thought and action along class lines?

For the purpose of answering these questions we utilized the following materials[1] and techniques:

HISTORICAL DATA

Background materials on (a) the culture of the dominant Pennsylvania-German stock; (b) the city's industrial evolution; (c) trade union organization; (d) radical activities in the 1890's, and (e) the origin and development of the Socialist party.

POPULATION DATA

(a) Comparative data from 1890 to 1930 for Reading—covering the period of origin and expansion of the movement.

(b) Inter-city comparative data for 1930. The cities selected are classified into five groups, each chosen for some characteristic that would serve as a control in the interpretation of the Reading material. In addition, comparisons with *urban* United States and *urban* Pennsylvania are included wherever possible.

Group A: Cities which have been *prominently identified with socialism.* These include Bridgeport, Conn., where socialists have been elected to various municipal and state offices, including a mayor, since 1934; and Milwaukee, Wis., where socialists have been elected to municipal, state, and federal offices since 1910, including a mayor from 1910 to 1912 and from 1916 to 1940.

[1]Published sources are listed in the bibliography, and referred to in footnotes throughout the study.

Group B: Cities situated in counties contiguous with Berks County in which Reading is located, all of which have a *predominance of Pennsylvania-German stock.* These include Allentown in Lehigh county, Lancaster in Lancaster county, and Lebanon in Lebanon county.

Group C: Cities whose chief industry is the *manufacture of textiles.* These include New Bedford, Mass. (cotton), Fall River, Mass. (cotton), Lowell, Mass. (cotton and wool), Paterson, N. J. (silk), and Reading, Pa. (silk hosiery).

Group D: Cities which are approximately *equal in size* to Reading, selected from five eastern states. These include Erie, Pa., Elizabeth, N. J., Wilmington, Del., Canton, Ohio, and Utica, N. Y.

Group E: The city of Muncie, Ind., because (1) it has a large proportion of *native white stock of native parentage,* and (2) a recent intensive study[2] indicates the emergence of *conflict along class lines.*

While no pretense is made at an exhaustive demographic comparison of American socialist and non-socialist cities, a selection of what are considered crucial cases (Groups A-E) is included in tables I-XI, and XXIII-XXVIII in order that comparable quantitative data, centered on the year 1930, may be conveniently accessible on questions relating to ethnic and racial qualities, type of industry, relative economic position, school attendance, population size and stability, home ownership, and voting support for Socialist and Communist candidates in municipal and national elections.

(c) Number and percent of *homes owned,* and of *native whites of native parentage,* by wards, for Reading (1910-1930), and for Bridgeport and Milwaukee (1930).

(d) *Rental* and *home values,* by wards, for Reading, Bridgeport, and Milwaukee (1930).

VOTING DATA

All of the data on voting behavior were secured from official sources. Reading data were transcribed from official records in the Berks County court house, with the exception of certain earlier years

[2]Muncie, Ind. is studied by R. S. and H. M. Lynd in *Middletown in Transition,* Harcourt, Brace, New York, 1937.

where it was necessary to resort to official counts published in the *Reading Eagle.* Bridgeport data were transcribed from official records in the city hall. Milwaukee data were copied from the official reports of the Board of Election Commissioners.

INTERVIEWS

These included talks and discussions with "old socialists"—persons active in the Reading movement from the beginning; with more recent adherents; with representatives of the opposition group within the Socialist party, which split off in 1936; with persons representing opposition outside the Party; with labor leaders; and with persons familiar with developments within the city during the past forty years. No attempt was made to treat quantitatively any data gathered in interviews.

We also talked with socialist leaders in Bridgeport, and secured data on Milwaukee through the medium of correspondence. Neither the Bridgeport nor Milwaukee material were analyzed as intensively as that of Reading.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

(a) The *Economic Score*

From rental and home value data available in the 1930 Census, mean average rental and home values were calculated for each ward. The two series were combined by adding their deviations from the mean divided by their respective standard deviations, each series being weighted by the percent of homes rented or owned in each ward. The result is an index of economic status for each ward, referred to as the *economic score.*[3] These economic indices, by wards, were calculated for Reading, Bridgeport, and Milwaukee.

(b) *Correlations*

Reading: The proportion of vote for Socialist, Republican, and Democratic candidates, by wards, in mayoralty elections from 1911 to 1935 were correlated with (1) the percent of *homes owned,* and (2) the percent of *native whites of native parentage,* in the nearest Census year.

[3]See tables XXX, XXXII, and XXXIV.

The proportion of the vote for various party candidates in municipal and presidential elections from 1923 to 1936, and the percent of registration by parties for 1935, were correlated with (1) the *economic score,* (2) the percent of *homes owned,* and (3) the percent of *native whites of native parentage* for 1930. The Congressional vote from 1926 to 1936 was correlated only with the *economic score,* 1930.

Bridgeport: The proportion of vote for mayoralty candidates from 1927 to 1935, and for Presidential candidates in 1932, were correlated with (1) the *economic score,* (2) percent of *homes owned,* and (3) percent of *native whites of native parentage* for 1930.

Milwaukee: The proportion of vote for the various party candidates in the 1928 municipal and presidential elections were correlated with (1) the *economic score,* (2) percent of *homes owned,* and (3) percent of *native whites of native parentage* for 1930. It was impossible to compute correlations between voting behavior and the above variables after 1930 because of a realignment of wards which no longer coincided with those for which population data were gathered in the 1930 Census.

All of these correlations were designed, wherever possible, to reveal relationships between voting behavior and certain economic and demographic characteristics, not only for a given year, but also over a period of years, and between cities having influential Socialist parties. As a result it is felt that our interpretation of the nature of, as well as changes in, mass socialist support in Reading rests on a reasonably firm quantitative basis.

Appendix 2

POPULATION AND VOTING DATA

Table

TABLE I

RACIAL AND NATIVITY COMPOSITION, 1930

		Percent Distribution			
	Total Population	Native White	Native White of Native Parentage	Foreign Born White	Negro
United States	122,775,046	77.8	57.1	10.9	9.7
Urban United States	68,954,823	75.6	48.6	15.6	7.5
Pennsylvania	9,631,350	82.6	56.1	12.8	4.5
READING	111,171	89.6	71.8	8.6	1.8
	Group A				
Bridgeport	146,716	69.9	25.6	27.8	2.3
Milwaukee	578,249	79.5	37.7	18.9	1.3
	Group B				
Allentown	92,563	89.2	69.3	10.4	.4
Lancaster	59,949	93.2	80.8	4.6	2.1
Lebanon	25,561	93.7	83.6	5.9	.4
	Group C				
New Bedford	112,597	63.5	19.7	33.2	3.2
Fall River	115,274	71.7	21.1	27.8	.3
Lowell	100,234	73.8	26.9	26.1	.1
Paterson	138,513	67.0	24.4	30.8	2.1
	Group D				
Erie	115,967	84.0	47.7	14.9	1.0
Elizabeth	114,589	70.3	29.3	25.4	4.2
Wilmington	106,597	76.8	53.3	11.8	11.3
Canton	104,906	84.5	62.0	12.6	2.9
Utica	101,740	78.6	37.6	20.9	.4
	Group E				
"Middletown"	46,548	93.1	88.2	1.2	5.7

TABLE II

NATIVE POPULATION BORN IN STATE OF RESIDENCE EXPRESSED AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION AND AS PERCENTAGE OF NATIVE POPULATION, 1930

	Total Population	Percent of Total Population Born in State of Residence	Percent of Native Population Born in State of Residence
Urban United States	68,954,823	60	72
Pennsylvania	9,631,350	77	89
READING	111,171	86*	94**
	Group A		
Bridgeport	146,716	52	73
Milwaukee	578,249	66	82
	Group B		
Allentown	92,563	84	93
Lancaster	59,949	89	93

*In 1910, 87.8 percent.
**Highest of all cities of 100,000 or more persons.

TABLE III

PERCENTAGE OF PERSONS CONSTITUTING FOREIGN WHITE STOCK BY PRINCIPAL NATIONAL ORIGINS FOR READING, BRIDGEPORT, AND MILWAUKEE, 1930

	Reading		Bridgeport		Milwaukee	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Population	111,171	100.0	146,716	100.0	578,249	100.0
Total Foreign White Stock*	29,376	26.4	105,738	72.1	351,078	60.7
Foreign White Stock of:						
German Origin		5.0		4.5		27.4
Italian "		5.3		14.9		2.2
Polish "		7.1		6.2		11.1
Irish "		.8		8.1		1.3
Czech "		1.3		8.1		1.9
Russian "		1.4		4.2		2.7

*Foreign white stock includes foreign-born and native white of foreign or mixed parentage. Total foreign white stock, and specific foreign white stock are expressed as *proportion of total population* in order to highlight the relative ethnic influence of these groups in each city.

TABLE IV

LEADING MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES, READING, PENNA. 1900-1929

	Number of Establishments	Percent of Wage Earners	Value of Products (Thousands)
1900—Total	843	100.0	36,903
Iron and Steel	7	19.7	9,530
Cars and General Shop Construction	4	10.2	6,315
Foundry & Machine Shop	27	8.2	2,437
Hardware	4	8.3	1,611
Knit Goods	21	8.7	1,326
1929—Total	323	100.0	120,919
Knit Goods	36	29.6	27,065
Meat Packing	4	.7	5,753
Bread & Bakery Products	47	2.6	3,609
Foundry & Machine Shop	22	2.6	3,474
Cigars & Cigarettes	9	3.1	3,067

TABLE V

PERCENTAGE OF GAINFUL WORKERS, BY SOCIAL-ECONOMIC GROUPS, 1930

	Urban* United States	Reading	Bridgeport	Milwaukee	Allentown	New Bedford
All Gainful Workers No.	38,425**	50,925	64,065	254,337	39,471	52,124
All Gainful Workers %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1. Professional Persons	7.7	4.5	5.9	6.1	6.4	4.4
2. Proprietors, Managers and Officials	9.5	6.3	7.7	7.9	7.9	5.6
3. Clerks and Kindred Workers	20.7	16.4	20.4	23.3	21.4	12.4
4. Skilled Workers and Foremen	16.3	16.0	19.6	20.7	15.8	12.6
5. Semiskilled Workers	20.8	34.9	28.0	25.3	30.7	52.1
5-a. Semiskilled in Manufacturing	11.9	27.9	21.0	17.6	22.9	45.3
5-aa. Semiskilled in Textiles	—	16.1	—	—	11.2	38.5
5-b. Other Semiskilled Workers	8.9	7.0	6.9	7.8	7.7	6.8
6. Unskilled Workers	25.0	21.8	18.4	16.7	17.9	13.0
6-a. Factory and Building Construction	8.8	13.1	9.9	7.7	9.0	5.2
6-b. Other Laborers	7.6	3.7	3.1	3.2	3.5	2.6
6-c. Servant Classes	8.7	4.7	4.8	5.4	5.2	4.6

*United States total excludes farm owners and tenants in Proprietor Class, and Farm Laborers in Unskilled Worker Class.
**Thousands

TABLE VI

PERCENTAGE OF GAINFUL WORKERS, BY SOCIAL-ECONOMIC GROUPS, BY SEX, READING, 1910 AND 1930

	Total		Male		Female	
	1910	1930	1910	1930	1910	1930
Total { Number	43,118	50,925	32,160	36,634	10,958	14,291
Total { Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1. Professional Persons	3.4	4.5	2.8	3.3	5.3	7.6
2. Proprietors, Managers and Officials	7.1	6.3	9.1	8.2	1.3	1.4
3. Clerks and Kindred Workers	12.0	16.4	11.6	14.2	13.3	21.9
4. Skilled Workers and Foremen	18.6	16.0	24.1	21.8	2.7	1.1
5. Semiskilled Workers	32.6	34.9	22.6	26.9	61.9	55.6
5-a. Semiskilled in Manufacturing	26.9	27.9	17.0	19.6	56.2	49.1
5-aa. Semiskilled in Textiles	9.9	16.1	2.4	8.6	31.7	35.2
5-b. Other Semiskilled Workers	5.7	7.0	5.7	7.3	5.7	6.5
6. Unskilled Workers	26.2	21.8	29.8	25.5	15.5	12.3
6-a. Factory and Building Construction	17.5	13.1	22.9	17.9	1.6	.8
6-b. Other Laborers	4.1	3.7	5.5	5.1	.1	.1
6-c. Servant Classes	4.4	4.7	1.2	2.1	13.8	11.4

TABLE VII

PERCENTAGE OF GAINFUL WORKERS, BY SOCIAL-ECONOMIC GROUPS, BY SEX, BRIDGEPORT AND MILWAUKEE, 1930

	Milwaukee		Bridgeport	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total { Number	191,005	63,332	46,702	17,363
Total { Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1. Professional Persons	4.7	10.1	3.8	11.5
2. Proprietors, Managers and Officials	9.9	1.9	10.2	1.2
3. Clerks and Kindred Workers	17.6	40.4	15.7	33.0
4. Skilled Workers and Foremen	27.2	1.2	26.5	1.1
5. Semiskilled Workers	23.5	30.8	23.4	40.2
5-a. Semiskilled in Manufacturing	15.8	23.0	16.1	34.4
5-b. Other Semiskilled Workers	7.8	7.8	7.3	5.8
6. Unskilled Workers	17.1	15.6	20.4	12.9
6-a. Factory and Building Construction	10.1	0.7	12.8	2.1
6-b. Other Laborers	4.2	0.2	4.2	.1
6-c. Servant Classes	2.3	14.7	2.6	10.7

TABLE VIII

HOMES: BY TENURE, BY FIFTH PERCENTILE RENTAL VALUE, AND BY PROPORTION OF ONE-FAMILY DWELLINGS, 1930

	Homes*		Fifth Percentile Rental Value	One-Family Dwellings Percent
	Owned Percent	Rented Percent		
Urban United States	42.8	55.7	$ 9.30	84.3
READING	59.5	38.8	15.42	90.5
		Group A		
Bridgeport	29.5	69.6	11.97	56.7
Milwaukee	42.3	56.2	16.20	65.7
		Group B		
Allentown	53.8	45.5	15.82	91.1
Lancaster	54.3	44.6	13.12	92.1
Lebanon	51.5	47.4	6.16	96.0
		Group C		
New Bedford	33.9	64.2	10.39	58.7
Fall River	26.6	71.8	9.55	47.6
Lowell	36.6	62.1	10.17	76.3
Paterson	35.7	63.1	15.39	49.4
		Group D		
Erie	48.6	50.2	15.08	84.0
Elizabeth	38.4	60.4	16.13	62.8
Wilmington	45.2	53.3	13.39	91.6
Canton	52.7	46.2	15.98	90.9
Utica	43.4	56.0	12.05	61.4
		Group E		
"Middletown"	50.5	48.1	11.67	92.9

*Tenure percents do not equal 100 because of "tenure unknown" category.

TABLE IX

HOMES BY TENURE, 1890-1930, AND BY PROPORTION OF HOMES OWNED FREE OR ENCUMBERED, 1890-1920, READING, PENNA.

		All Homes		Owned Homes	
		Percent**	Percent	Percent	Percent with
Year	Number	Owned	Rented	Free	Encumbrance
1890	12,272	39.0	60.9	54.6	45.4
1900	17,002	37.1	62.9	52.6	47.4
1910	21,809	38.6	59.0	52.6	47.4
1920	25,202	46.0	52.7	47.4	52.6
1930	27,659	59.5	38.8	*	*

*Data not available for 1930.
**Percents do not add up to 100 because of "tenure unknown" category.

TABLE X

HOMES BY TENURE AND MEDIAN VALUE, READING AND SELECTED SUBURBS, 1930

	Owned Homes			Rented Homes		
	Number	Percent	Median Value	Number	Percent	Median Value
READING	16,460	60	$ 6,041	10,731	40	$33.61
Mt. Penn	674	79	7,750	203	21	47.62
Shillington	991	84	7,525	183	16	36.82
West Reading	870	71	7,423	358	29	38.54
Wyomissing	656	83	11,225	132	17	50.00

TABLE XI

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
PROPORTION OF PERSONS, AGED 7-20 YEARS, ATTENDING SCHOOL, 1930

	Attending School				
	7-20 Years Old Percent	7-13 Years Old Percent	14-15 Years Old Percent	16-17 Years Old Percent	18-20 Years Old Percent
United States	74.0	95.3	88.8	57.3	21.4
Urban United States	75.0	97.3	92.7	60.5	22.5
Native White of Nat. Par.	77.9	97.5	93.8	65.9	26.8
Foreign and Mixed Par.	74.6	98.1	93.1	56.4	19.7
Foreign-born White	55.4	97.5	93.5	53.5	16.0
Negro	67.0	94.2	83.7	49.2	13.9
Pennsylvania	73.9	97.3	91.2	48.6	17.2
READING	66.6	95.5	86.5	35.7	11.0
Group A					
Bridgeport	71.9	98.4	86.6	42.9	15.0
Milwaukee	79.6	98.2	98.6	87.7	23.5
Group B					
Allentown	70.0	98.0	88.1	39.4	15.2
Lancaster	73.0	97.8	91.8	48.1	19.9
Lebanon	71.1	98.1	81.7	42.2	13.2
Group C					
New Bedford	71.8	97.8	87.1	39.1	16.0
Fall River	71.6	96.8	84.6	38.4	17.5
Lowell	77.0	98.8	93.7	51.5	19.2
Paterson	71.3	98.5	91.5	42.5	16.5
Group D					
Erie	75.9	96.6	96.6	55.5	21.4
Elizabeth	73.1	98.1	96.1	46.1	14.4
Wilmington	73.6	98.3	93.9	51.8	17.4
Canton	79.0	98.5	97.3	73.9	20.3
Utica	75.3	97.8	90.2	56.4	20.6
Group E					
"Middletown"	73.5	98.7	97.7	59.7	18.4

TABLE XII

PRINCIPAL SOCIALIST CANDIDATES *ELECTED TO OFFICE*, READING, PENNA., 1910-1935

Year	Office	Name	Votes Number	Votes Percent
1910:				
	Pennsylvania Assembly	James H. Maurer	4,120	29.5*
1911:				
	Common Council			
	6th Ward		644	42.9
	10th Ward		336	38.1
	13th Ward		887	41.2
	Select Council			
	13th Ward		914	42.6
	15th Ward		594	34.5
1914:				
	Pennsylvania Assembly	James H. Maurer	3,869	28.4*
1916:				
	Pennsylvania Assembly	James H. Maurer	6,239	36.7*
1927:				
	Mayor	J. Henry Stump	12,304	49.9
	City Council	James H. Maurer	11,749	48.8*
	City Council	George W. Snyder	11,549	47.9*
	City Controller	Walter Hollinger	9,203	38.0
	School Director	Raymond Hofses	11,808	49.5*
	School Director	George D. Snyder	10,140	42.5*
1929:				
	City Council	William C. Hoverter	8,688	43.0*
	City Council	Jesse E. George	8,405	41.6*
	School Director	Mrs. Hazelette Hoopes	7,708	39.0*
	School Director	Howard McDonough	7,688	38.9*
1930:				
	Pennsylvania Assembly	Darlington Hoopes	7,413	38.4*
	Pennsylvania Assembly	Mrs. Lilith Wilson	7,055	37.0*
1932:				
	Pennsylvania Assembly	Darlington Hoopes	11,773	38.7*
	Pennsylvania Assembly	Mrs. Lilith Wilson	11,299	37.2*
1934:				
	Pennsylvania Assembly	Darlington Hoopes	15,029	51.4*
	Pennsylvania Assembly	Mrs. Lilith Wilson	14,261	49.0*

TABLE XII (*Continued*)

PRINCIPAL SOCIALIST CANDIDATES *ELECTED TO OFFICE*, READING, PENNA., 1910-1935

Year	Office	Name	Votes Number	Votes Percent
1935:				
	Mayor	J. Henry Stump	20,575	49.6
	City Council—4 years	Howard McDonough	18,708	46.3*
	City Council—4 years	Stewart Tomlinson	18,412	45.5*
	City Council—2 years	Charles F. Sands	18,597	45.8*
	City Controller	Walter R. Hollinger	18,688	46.1
	City Treasurer	William C. Hoverter	19,009	45.7
	School Director	Mrs. Hazelette Hoopes	19,370	51.2*
	School Director	Alvin F. Stone	18,930	50.0*
	School Director	George D. Snyder	18,163	48.0*
	County Commissioner	Amos N. Lesher	18,284	46.0[x]
	County Prison Inspector	Charles M. Weiss	18,168	45.9**
	County Prison Inspector	Gertrude M. Hiller	18,066	45.6**

NOTE: In 1935 the Socialists secured control of the borough governments of Kenhorst and Laureldale, suburbs of Reading. Also in 1935 the Socialists elected 107 of a total of 196 local ward officials within the city.

*When two or more candidates are elected to similar offices such as Assemblyman, Councilman or School Director, etc., the vote for each candidate is expressed as a percent of one-half or one-third (as the case may be) of the total vote cast for all candidates for the respective offices.

[x]Percent of city vote only.

TABLE XIII

VOTE FOR SOCIALIST CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR, STATE ASSEMBLY, COUNTY CONTROLLER, CONGRESSMAN, AND PRESIDENT, READING, PENNA., 1898-1940

	Mayor Number	Mayor Percent	State Assembly[a] Number	State Assembly[a] Percent	County Controller Number	County Controller Percent	Congressman Number	Congressman Percent	President Number	President Percent
1898			343 (S.L.)	2.7						
1899	123	0.8								
1900			200	1.2			199	1.2	197	1.2
1901					75 (S.L.)	.9				
1902	198	1.2	1,218	8.7			1,172	8.5		
1903										
1904			895	5.7	884	5.5	992	6.3	1,153	6.6
1905	745	4.4								
1906			1,274	11.5			1,224	11.0		
1907					566	4.8				
1908	674	4.1	1,213	8.6			1,256	8.3	1,425	8.6
1909										
1910			4,120[a]	29.5			3,805	29.6		
1911	5,273	30.8			5,590	32.7				
1912			3,716	23.4			3,033	19.0	2,686	16.0
1913										
1914			3,869[a]	28.4			2,646	19.6		
1915	1,679[c]	10.0			2,386	14.6				
1916			6,239[a]	36.7			2,881	17.2	2,479	14.3
1917										
1918			2,916	24.3			1,639	13.7		
1919	5,869	33.5			4,779	28.1				
1920			6,605	26.4			4,612	19.0	4,605	18.4
1921										
1922			5,266	29.6			3,169	17.4		
1923	6,414	31.1			4,603	23.3				

TABLE XIII (*Continued*)

VOTE FOR SOCIALIST CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR, STATE ASSEMBLY, COUNTY CONTROLLER, CONGRESSMAN, AND PRESIDENT, READING, PENNA., 1898-1940

	Mayor		State Assembly[d]		County Controller		Congressman		President	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1924			5,466	21.9			3,863	15.3	6,783[e]	25.4
1925										
1926			5,355	32.0			2,278	13.1		
1927	12,304[a]	49.9			8,246[b]	34.3				
1928			7,922	24.1			6,144	20.3	4,406	12.8
1929										
1930			7,413[a]	38.4			6,628	33.4		
1931	14,395[f]	45.3			12,763[b]	40.7				
1932			11,773[a]	38.7			11,288[b]	36.7	9,533	30.5
1933										
1934			15,029[a]	51.4			13,692	45.3		
1935	20,575[a]	49.6			18,092[b]	44.5				
1936			9,080	25.1			7,730	20.8	1,762	4.7
1937										
1938			8,564	23.2			6,410	17.2		
1939	14,066	38.0								
1940			7,598	18.5			4,121	9.7	1,095	2.6

[a]Elected to office.

[b]Highest vote, but not elected to office (e.g., Congressman or County Controller whose elections depend on majority in entire county).

[c]Socialists conducted sticker campaign in Non-Partisan election.

[d]Higher of two candidates only.

[e]LaFollette vote.

[f]Socialist candidate defeated by Republican and Democratic Fusion.

TABLE XIV

VOTE FOR MAYOR, READING, PENNA, 1899-1939

	Socialist		Republican		Democrat	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1899	123	0.8	7,508	49.8	7,450	49.4
1902	198	1.2	8,061	47.1	8,843	51.7
1905[a]	745	4.4	5,242	31.4	7,422	44.4
1908	674	4.1	8,776	53.7	6,900	42.2
1911	5,273	30.8	6,213	36.3	5,260	30.7
1915[b]	1,679	10.0	9,663	57.3	5,523	32.7
1919	5,869	33.5	7,738	44.2	3,911	22.3
1923	6,414	31.1	5,157	25.0	9,087	44.0
1927	12,304	49.9	7,077	28.7	5,268	21.4
1931[c]	14,395	45.3	9,757	30.7	7,563	23.8
1935	20,575	49.6	8,133	19.6	12,788	30.8
1939	14,066	38.0	8,164	22.1	14,754	39.9

NOTE: Percents sometimes do not equal 100 because of additional minority candidates.

[a]An independent candidate polled 19.8 per cent of the vote.

[b]Under a Non-Partisan law, the two chief candidates were listed as non-partisan. The Socialist candidate, however, polled 10 percent of the vote on the basis of a "sticker" campaign.

[c]The Republican and Democratic vote was given to the same candidate on a FUSION ticket.

TABLE XV

VOTE FOR PENNSYLVANIA ASSEMBLYMAN, READING, PENNA., 1898-1940[a]

	Socialist		Republican		Democrat	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1898	343[b]	2.7	5,190	41.3	5,704	45.4
1900	200	1.2	7,725	47.2	8,338	51.0
1902	1,218	8.7	6,620	47.5	6,259	44.9
1904	895	5.7	8,694	55.3	6,306	40.1
1906	1,274	11.5	4,465	40.4	5,611	50.8
1908	1,213	8.6	6,938	49.5	6,915	49.3
1910	4,120	29.5 (1)	3,867	27.7	4,182	30.0
1912	3,716	23.4	1,687	10.6[c]	5,781	36.4
1914	3,869	28.4 (1)	3,869	28.4	3,788	27.8
1916	6,239	36.7 (1)	5,138	30.2	5,819	34.2
1918	2,916	24.3	4,579	38.2	4,947	41.2
1920	6,605	26.4	12,038	48.1	5,422	21.7
1922	5,266	29.6	6,915	38.8	6,201	34.8
1924	5,466	21.9	11,997	48.0	7,578	30.3
1926	5,355	32.0	6,074	36.3	6,061	36.3
1928	7,922	24.1	16,693	51.1	8,110	24.8
1930	7,413	38.4 (2)	6,970	36.1	6,074	31.5
1932	11,773	38.7 (2)	10,269	33.8	8,994	29.6
1934[d]	15,029	51.4 (2)	6,985	23.9	6,608	22.6
1936	9,080[e]	25.1	10,156	28.1	17,320	47.8
1938	8,564	23.2	13,763	37.3	14,971	40.6
1940	7,598	18.5	13,655	33.3	22,359	54.5

NOTE: Percents sometimes do not equal 100 because of additional minority candidates. Figures in parentheses indicate number of Socialist Assemblymen elected.

[a]Each party nominates two candidates, and any two who receive the highest number of votes are elected, irrespective of party. In this table, however, we list only the highest candidate in *each* party, expressing the vote for each as a percent of one-half the total vote for all candidates. Thus, the percents are more nearly comparable with those in which one candidate is elected to office.

[b]Socialist-Labor.

[c]Washington Party candidate was same as Republican, receiving 31.3 percent of vote.

[d]Republican and Democratic candidates were the same on Fusion ticket.

[e]Leftist-Socialist candidate received 416 votes (1.1 percent).

TABLE XVI

VOTE FOR BERKS COUNTY CONTROLLER, READING, PENNA., 1901-1935

	Socialist[a]		Republican		Democrat	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1901			3,929	47.0	4,078	48.7
1904	894	5.5	9,176	57.1	5,880	36.6
1907[b]	566	4.8	3,743	31.5	5,211	43.9
1911	5,590	32.7	5,397	31.6	6,097	35.7
1915	2,386	14.6	5,960	36.6	7,950	48.8
1919	4,779	28.1	6,286	37.0	5,947	35.0
1923	4,603	23.3	7,292	36.9	7,870	39.8
1927	8,246	34.3	7,673	31.9	8,144	33.8
1931	12,763	40.7	8,745	27.9	9,864	31.4
1935	18,092	44.5	11,503	28.3	11,075	27.2

NOTE: No Socialist candidate for County Controller was ever elected. Percents do not equal 100 in certain years because of additional minority candidates.

[a]Throughout the county (exclusive of Reading) the percentages of total vote for the Socialist candidate ranged from .7 percent in 1904 to 21.6 percent in 1935.

[b]An independent candidate polled 19.8 percent of the vote.

TABLE XVII

VOTE FOR CONGRESSMAN, READING, PENNA., 1900-1940

	Socialist[a]		Republican		Democrat	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1900	199	1.2	8,437	52.0	7,574	46.7
1902	1,172	8.5	6,210	44.7	6,499	46.9
1904	992	6.3	8,245	52.1	6,418	40.6
1906	1,224	11.0	4,628	41.5	5,284	47.4
1908	1,256	8.3	6,297	41.8	7,337	48.7
1910	3,805	29.6	3,669	28.5	5,221	40.6
1912[b]	3,033	19.0	1,433	9.0	6,311	39.6
1914	2,646	19.6	5,099	37.7	4,389	32.5
1916	2,881	17.2	7,362	44.1	6,336	37.9
1918	1,639	13.7	4,869	40.7	5,363	44.8
1920	4,612	19.0	12,729	52.4	6,524	26.8
1922	3,169	17.4	8,263	45.4	6,764	37.2
1924	3,863	15.3	11,377	45.0	10,035	39.7
1926	2,278	13.1	8,873	50.9	6,291	36.1
1928	6,144	20.3	16,010	52.8	8,183	27.0
1930	6,628	33.4	5,955	30.0	7,275	36.6
1932	11,288	36.7	9,609	31.2	9,791	31.8
1934[c]	13,692	45.3	7,359	24.3	7,898	26.1
1936	7,730	20.8	11,408	30.6	16,898	45.4
1938	6,410	17.2	14,627	39.2	16,254	43.6
1940	4,121	9.7	14,322	33.8	23,236	54.9

NOTE: No Socialist candidate for Congress was ever elected. Percents do not equal 100 in certain years because of additional minority candidates.

[a]Throughout the county (exclusive of Reading) the percentages of total vote for the Socialist candidate ranged from a low of 1 percent in 1904 to a high of 19.6 percent in 1932 and 1934. Thereafter, the percentage dropped to 7.2 in 1936, 5.5 in 1938, and 2. in 1940.

[b]The Washington Party candidate, who was also the Republican candidate, polled 31.5 percent.

[c]The Republican and Democratic vote was given to the same candidate on a Fusion ticket.

TABLE XVIII

VOTE FOR PRESIDENT, READING, PENNA., 1900-1940

	Socialist[a]		Republican		Democrat	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1900	197	1.2	8,681	52.0	7,570	45.4
1904	1,153	6.6	9,742	55.7	6,373	36.5
1908	1,425	8.6	7,972	48.0	7,065	42.5
1912[b]	2,686	16.0	1,594	9.5	6,107	36.3
1916	2,479	14.3	6,871	39.7	7,740	44.7
1920	4,605	18.4	13,360	53.4	6,864	27.4
1924[d]	6,783	25.4[c]	13,666	51.1	6,165	23.0
1928[d]	4,406	12.8	21,337	62.0	8,593	25.0
1932	9,533	30.5	11,568	37.0	9,927	31.8
1936	1,762	4.7	10,515	27.8	24,208	64.1
1940[d]	1,095	2.6	13,900	32.4	27,819	64.9

NOTE: Percents do not equal 100 in certain years because of additional minority candidates.

[a]Throughout the county (exclusive of Reading) the percentages of total vote for the Socialist candidate ranged from 1 per cent in 1904 to 15.4 percent in 1932. Thereafter the percentage dropped to 1.8 in 1936, and .8 in 1940.

[b]38.2 percent of the vote went to the Bull Moose candidate.

[c]Includes 4,689 (17.5%) *Socialist* votes, and 2,094 (7.8%) *Labor* votes for LaFollette.

[d]Includes 50 (0.2%) *Communist* votes in 1924; 30 (0.1%) in 1928; 52 (0.1%) in 1940.

TABLE XIX

REGISTERED VOTERS, BY PARTY, READING, PENNA., 1914-1941

	Total[a] Number	Socialist Number	%	Republican Number	%	Democrat Number	%
1914	16,916	1,097	6.5	5,102	30.2	7,832	46.2
1916	18,787	1,040	5.5	7,522	40.0	8,023	42.7
1919	19,463	1,340	6.9	9,127	46.9	8,469	43.5
1920	26,557	1,942	7.3	13,962	52.6	8,923	33.6
1921	24,041	1,864	7.8	12,143	50.5	9,179	38.2
1922	20,430	1,292	6.3	10,307	50.5	8,073	39.5
1923	23,326	1,187	5.1	11,330	48.6	10,182	43.7
1924	27,920	1,075	3.9	14,601	52.3	10,442	37.4
1925	20,576	595	2.9	9,845	47.8	9,695	47.1
1926	19,346	550	2.8	10,647	55.2	7,572	39.0
1927	27,314	1,238	4.5	12,784	46.8	12,221	44.7
1928	35,692	1,555	4.4	21,341	59.5	11,820	33.1
1929	22,775	1,936	8.5	10,944	48.0	9,463	41.5
1930	21,500	2,462	11.5	10,760	50.0	7,622	35.5
1931	33,738	4,542	13.5	14,076	41.7	14,396	42.7
1932	32,410	3,679	11.4	14,410	44.5	13,311	41.1
1933	29,229	3.877	13.1	11,119	38.0	13,504	46.2
1935	44,247	6,774	15.3	15,905	35.9	20,721	46.8
1936	48,060	6,482	13.5	16,369	34.1	24,110	50.2
1937	49,051	6,583	13.4	16,640	34.0	24,660	50.3
1938	52,855	5,827	11.0	18,063	34.2	27,806	52.6
1939	52,616	5,375	10.2	17,752	33.7	28,309	53.8
1940	52,385	4,494	8.6	17,725	33.8	28,939	55.2
1941	48,119	4,600	9.6	16,527	34.3	25,753	53.5

SOURCE: 1914-1933, *Reading Eagle*; 1935-1941, Berks County Registration Commission.

[a]Non-Partisan and other minority registrations were high in certain years (e.g. 1914 and 1916), but on the whole averaged about 3 percent each year. Only the established parties are listed in this table.

TABLE XIX A

TOTAL REGISTRATION AND TOTAL VOTE, WITH PERCENT OF REGISTRANTS VOTING, IN MAYORALTY AND PRESIDENTIAL YEARS, READING, PENNSYLVANIA, 1916-1940

Year	Total Registration: All Parties	Total Vote: All Parties	Percent of Registrants Voting
1916	18,787	17,321	92.2
1919	19,463	17,518	90.0
1920	26,557	25,041	94.3
1923	23,326	20,658	88.6
1924	27,920	26,753	95.8
1927	27,314	24,650	90.2
1928	35,692	34,403	96.4
1931	33,738	31,768	94.2
1932	32,410	31,228	96.4
1935*	44,247	41,496	93.8
1936	48,060	37,786	78.6
1939	52,616	36,984	70.3
1940	52,385	42,882	81.9

*Prior to 1935, State law provided for the registration of electors in person before registrars. Each year the prospective voter had to reappear and register. Beginning with 1935, State law provided for a uniform system of permanent registration. Under this system, a registered voter must vote at least once within a two-year period or his name is withdrawn from the list.

TABLE XX

RATIO OF SOCIALIST PERCENT OF VOTE FOR MAYOR, AND PRESIDENT, TO SOCIALIST PERCENT OF REGISTRATION, READING, PENNA., 1916-1940

Year	A Socialist Registration: Percent	B Socialist Vote, Mayor: Percent	C Socialist Vote, President: Percent	D Ratio of B or C to A
1916	5.5		14.3	2.60
1919	6.9	33.5		4.86
1920	7.3		18.4	2.52
1923	5.1	31.1		6.10
1924	3.9		25.4*	6.51
1927	4.5	49.9		11.09
1928	4.4		12.8	2.91
1931	13.5	45.3		3.36
1932	11.4		30.5	2.68
1935	15.3	49.6		3.24
1936	13.5		4.7	.35
1939	10.2	38.0		3.73
1940	8.6		2.6	.30

*In this year, the Socialist Party endorsed the Presidential candidacy of LaFollette; hence, a more than usual number of Non-Socialist votes may be included in the total vote for LaFollette.

NOTE: These ratios, if calculated on the basis of absolute numbers of registrants and voters in each party, are slightly, though uniformly, smaller. This difference is accounted for by the fact that a small percentage of voters (see table XIX), while registered as non-partisan, are distributed among the three major parties in the general election.

TABLE XXI

RATIO OF DEMOCRATIC PERCENT OF VOTE FOR MAYOR, AND PRESIDENT, TO DEMOCRATIC PERCENT OF REGISTRATION READING, PENNA., 1916-1940

Year	A Democratic Registration: Percent	B Democratic Vote, Mayor: Percent	C Democratic Vote, President: Percent	D Ratio of B or C to A
1916	42.7		44.7	1.05
1919	43.5	22.3		.51
1920	33.6		27.4	.82
1923	43.7	44.0		1.01
1924	37.4		23.0	.61
1927	44.7	21.4		.48
1928	33.1		25.0	.76
1931	42.7	23.8*		.56
1932	41.1		31.8	.77
1935	46.8	30.8		.66
1936	50.2		64.1	1.28
1939	53.8	39.9		.74
1940	55.2		64.9	1.18

*While Democrats and Republicans supported the same candidate in a Fusion campaign, the party votes were recorded separately.

NOTE: See Note, table XX.

TABLE XXII

RATIO OF REPUBLICAN PERCENT OF VOTE FOR MAYOR, AND PRESIDENT TO REPUBLICAN PERCENT OF REGISTRATION, READING, PENNA., 1916-1940

Year	A Republican Registration: Percent	B Republican Vote, Mayor: Percent	C Republican Vote, President: Percent	D Ratio of B or C to A
1916	40.0		39.7	.99
1919	46.9	44.2		.94
1920	52.6		53.4	1.02
1923	48.6	25.0		.51
1924	52.3		51.1	.98
1927	46.8	28.7		.61
1928	59.5		62.0	1.04
1931	41.7	30.7*		.74
1932	44.5		37.0	.84
1935	35.9	19.6		.55
1936	34.1		27.8	.82
1939	33.7	2.1		.66
1940	33.8		32.4	.96

*While the Democrats and Republicans supported the same candidate in a Fusion campaign, the party votes were recorded separately.

NOTE: See Note, table XX.

TABLE XXIII

PERCENT VOTE FOR SOCIALIST AND COMMUNIST CANDIDATES IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, 1928-1932, AND MAYORALTY ELECTIONS, 1927-1935

	Socialist				Communist		
	President		Mayor		President		Mayor
	1928	1932[a]	1927	1935	1928	1932	1935
United States		2.2					
READING	12.8	30.5	49.9	49.6	0.1		
Group A							
Bridgeport		8.6[b]	5.0	55.4		0.2	0.6
Milwaukee	6.8	13.5	58.2[c]		.1	.5	
Group B							
Allentown	.6	4.1		2.3		.1	.2
Lancaster	.5	3.0	.2[d]				
Group C							
New Bedford	1.6	3.9			.4	.5	
Fall River	.4[e]	.2			.4	.3	
Paterson	.6	4.8		.5	.2	.4	
Group D							
Erie	.2	5.7			.1		
Elizabeth	.4	2.8		.3[f]	.2	.3	
Canton	.3[g]	2.8[g]			.2	.6	
Utica	2.1	1.6[h]	2.5	1.5		.1	
Group E							
"Middletown"	.2	1.9					

SOURCE: Voting data derived through correspondence with elections boards. Unless otherwise indicated, no other left-wing party (Socialist Labor, Workers, Communist, Labor, Industrialist) received .1 of one percent or more of the total vote.

[a]Comparison with 1936 omitted because in that year the Socialists polled only .4 percent of the total vote in the U. S. In Reading, their percent dropped to 4.7.

[b]Socialist Labor—0.6 percent.

[c]Because Milwaukee has a non-partisan election law, Hoan, as one of two candidates, secured Socialist as well as non-Socialist votes. Election held in Spring, 1928.

[d]1929.

[e]Socialist Labor—0.3 percent

[f]1936.

[g]Socialist Labor—0.1 percent, 1928; 0.3 percent, 1932.

[h]Socialist Labor 0.2 percent.

TABLE XXIV

NUMBER AND PERCENT VOTE FOR MAYOR, BRIDGEPORT, 1903-1935*

	Socialist		Republican		Democrat		Others	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1903**	143	1.0	5,718	41.4	7,900	57.2	65	.4
1911	3,625	24.3	5,611	37.7	5,331	35.8	307	
1921	1,966	6.5	12,048	39.8	16,266	53.7		
1927	1,484	5.0	16,173	54.3	12,123	40.7		
1931	15,084	35.3	9,374	22.0	17,889	41.9	351	
1935	24,267	55.4	10,363	23.6	8,909	20.3	284	

SOURCE: Official Records, City Hall, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

*Selected years are included in this table. Bridgeport elections for Mayor are held biennially, in the Fall. In the years from 1911 to 1939, the Socialist candidate was Jasper McLevy. He was elected mayor first in 1933 and was re-elected in 1935, 1937, and 1939. In these election years, other Socialist candidates do not lag far behind McLevy, in most cases.

**In this year, McLevy ran for the office of City Clerk, polling 172 votes.

TABLE XXV

NUMBER AND PERCENT VOTE FOR PRESIDENT, BRIDGEPORT, 1932

	Socialist		Republican		Democrat		Others	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1932	4,280	8.6	19,991	40.0	25,070	50.4	415[x]	

SOURCE: Official Records, City Hall, Bridgeport, Connecticut.

[x]Includes 303 Socialist-Labor, and 112 Communist.

TABLE XXVI

NUMBER AND PERCENT VOTE FOR MAYOR, SPRING ELECTIONS, MILWAUKEE, 1904-1932

Year	Total Vote	Candidate	Socialist Vote[a] Number	Percent
1904	59,604	Berger	15,056	25.3
1908	63,117	Seidel	20,887	33.1
1910	59,484	Seidel[b]	27,608	46.4
1912	74,510	Seidel	30,272	40.6
1914	66,795	Seidel	29,122	43.6
1916	66,069	Hoan[b]	33,863	51.2
1918	72,881	Hoan[b]	37,485	51.4
1920[c]	77,735	Hoan[b]	40,530	52.2
1924	131,913	Hoan[b]	74,418	56.4
1928	101,531	Hoan[b]	64,874	58.2
1932	170,790	Hoan[b]	108,279	63.3
1936		Hoan[b]		
1940		Hoan		

SOURCE: 10th Biennial Report of the Board of Election Commissioners, Milwaukee, 1929, p. xxi; also later reports.

[a]Prior to 1914 there were three or more candidates; after that, only two in each election (non partisan). City officials are elected in the Spring of the year, preceded by a Primary. Hoan usually polled a larger vote than other Socialist candidates. For example, in 1924 the Socialist candidate for city comptroller polled 59,611 votes, and in 1928, the candidate for this office polled 44,017 votes. However, the difference was not so great in certain other years. In 1920, the candidate for comptroller polled 36,992 votes; in 1932, the candidate for city treasurer polled 103,468 votes.

While the figures are not given here, Hoan was re-elected in 1936 but defeated in 1940.

[b]Elected to office.

[c]Beginning in 1920, the mayor was elected for a four year term.

TABLE XXVII

NUMBER AND PERCENT VOTE FOR SHERIFF, *FALL ELECTION*, MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN, 1920, 1928, 1930

Year	Socialist Number	Socialist Percent	Republican Number	Republican Percent	Democrat Number	Democrat Percent	Others Number	Others Percent
1920	48,442	42.1	66,233	57.9				
1928	42,405	27.8	62,880	41.2	47,305	31.0		
1930	40,840	40.4	32,352	32.0	14,990	14.8	13,289*	13.1

SOURCE: Biennial Reports, Board of Election Commissioners, Milwaukee.

*Includes 555 (.5 percent) Communist votes.

TABLE XXVIII

NUMBER AND PERCENT VOTE FOR PRESIDENT, MILWAUKEE, 1924-1932

Year	Socialist Number	Socialist Percent	Republican Number	Republican Percent	Democrat Number	Democrat Percent	Others Number	Others Percent
1924	68,161*	55.4	41,236	33.5	12,430	10.1	847	
1928	11,183	6.8	61,677	37.6	90,440	55.1	460**	
1932	27,456	13.5	39,059	19.2	135,711	66.4	1,262**	

SOURCE: Biennial Reports, Board of Election Commissioners, Milwaukee.

*Socialists supported LaFollette-Wheeler ticket; hence, total includes many non-Socialist votes.

**Includes 237 Communist votes in 1928, and 960 in 1932.

TABLE XXIX

MEAN RENTAL AND HOME VALUES, WITH RELATIVE RANKINGS (d/σ) BY WARDS, READING, 1930

Ward	Rental Values Mean	Rental Values Deviation from Mean of Ward Means	Rental Values d/σ	Home Values Mean	Home Values Deviation from Mean of Ward Means	Home Values d/σ
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1	$ 31.37	$ —5.18	—1.05	$ 6,063.	$ —1,222.	— .72
2	27.17	—9.38	—1.90	5,020.	—2,265.	—1.33
3	40.75	4.20	.85	8,278.	993.	.58
4	40.85	4.30	.87	9,408.	2,123.	1.25
5	33.85	—2.70	— .55	7,310.	25.	.01
6	33.92	—2.63	— .53	5,593.	—1,692.	— .99
7	45.10	8.55	1.74	10,215.	2,930.	1.72
8	43.18	6.63	1.35	11,005.	3,720.	2.18
9	35.85	— .70	— .14	6,450.	— 835.	— .49
10	27.87	—8.68	—1.76	5,158.	—2,127.	—1.25
11	33.37	—3.18	— .65	5,985.	—1,300.	— .76
12	35.65	— .90	— .18	5,828.	—1,457.	— .86
13	35.55	—1.00	— .20	6,975.	— 310.	— .18
14	43.13	6.58	1.34	9,075.	1,790.	1.05
15	36.72	.17	.03	7,098.	— 187.	— .11
16	35.20	—1.35	— .27	7,258.	— 27.	— .02
17	41.20	4.65	.94	8,320.	1,035.	.61
18	37.22	.67	.14	6,095.	—1,190.	— .70
	Mean = $36.55			Mean = $ 7,285		
	$\Sigma d^2/N$ = 24.2882			$\Sigma d^2/N$ = 2,903,583		
	σ = 4.928			σ = 1,704		

TABLE XXX

ECONOMIC SCORE, BY WARDS, READING 1930

Based on combination of d/σ values of Mean Rentals and Home Values for each Ward, *weighted* by their respective percentages of Rented and Owned Homes.

Ward	Rental Values d/σ	Rental Values Percent Rented* (weight)	Home Values d/σ	Home Values Percent Owned* (weight)	Economic Score
	(3)		(6)		(7)
1	—1.05	.480	— .72	.520	— .88
2	—1.90	.425	—1.33	.575	—1.57
3	.85	.569	.58	.431	.74
4	.87	.666	1.25	.334	1.00
5	— .55	.587	.01	.413	— .32
6	— .53	.477	— .99	.523	— .77
7	1.74	.601	1.72	.399	1.73
8	1.35	.664	2.18	.336	1.63
9	— .14	.509	— .49	.491	— .31
10	—1.76	.344	—1.25	.656	—1.42
11	— .65	.402	— .76	.598	— .72
12	— .18	.320	— .86	.680	— .64
13	— .20	.307	— .18	.693	— .19
14	1.34	.327	1.05	.673	1.14
15	.03	.302	— .11	.698	— .07
16	— .27	.305	— .02	.695	— .09
17	.94	.270	.61	.730	.70
18	.14	.238	— .70	.762	— .50

NOTE: The original d/σ calculations were carried to four decimal places.

*These percents equal 100 for each ward because they are based on the total number of cases for which Census data were secured, thus excluding the "tenure unknown" category, which normally appears in Census tabulations.

TABLE XXXI

MEAN RENTAL AND HOME VALUES, WITH RELATIVE RANKINGS (d/σ) BY WARDS, MILWAUKEE, 1930

District	Rental Values Mean	Rental Values Deviation from Mean of Ward Means	Rental Values d/σ	Home Values Mean	Home Values Deviation from Mean of Ward Means	Home Values d/σ
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1	$ 53.00	$ 11.34	1.10	$ 8,050.	$ 737.	.49
2	37.97	— 3.69	— .36	6,170.	1,143.	— .75
3	58.45	16.79	1.63	9,833.	2,520.	1.66
4	56.60	14.94	1.45	11,060.	3,747.	2.47
5	32.40	— 9.26	— .90	5,177.	—2,136.	—1.41
6	33.47	— 8.19	— .80	5,838.	—1,475.	— .97
7	36.22	— 5.44	— .53	6,425.	— 888.	— .58
8	28.80	—12.86	—1.25	5,965.	—1,348.	— .89
9	33.07	— 8.59	— .84	6,025.	—1,288.	— .85
10	34.02	— 7.64	— .74	6,627.	— 686.	— .45
11	32.87	— 8.79	— .86	6,245.	—1,068.	— .70
12	28.35	—13.31	—1.29	5,250.	—2,063.	—1.36
13	36.47	— 5.19	— .50	6,823.	— 490.	— .32
14	29.50	—12.16	—1.18	6,732.	— 581.	— .38
15	50.68	9.02	.88	8,668.	1,355.	.89
16	51.55	9.89	.96	8,050.	737.	.49
17	39.40	— 2.26	— .22	6,930.	— 383.	— .25
18	67.80	26.14	2.54	10,720.	3,407.	2.24
19	47.43	5.77	.56	8,607.	1,294.	.85
20	47.40	5.74	.56	7,543.	230.	.15
21	41.00	— .66	— .06	6,537.	— 776.	— .51
22	49.70	8.04	.78	8,373.	1,060.	.70
23	40.35	— 1.31	— .13	7,295.	— 18.	— .01
24	32.55	— 9.11	— .89	6,685.	— 628.	— .41
25	42.33	.67	.07	7,202.	— 111.	— .07
	Mean = $ 41.66			Mean = $ 7,313		
	$\Sigma d^2/N$ = 105.6220			$\Sigma d^2/N$ = 2,307,250		
	σ = 10.28			σ = 1,519		

TABLE XXXII

ECONOMIC SCORE, BY WARDS, MILWAUKEE, 1930

Based on combination of d/σ values of Mean Rentals and Home Values for each Ward, *weighted* by their respective percentages of Rented and Owned Homes.

Ward	Rental Values d/σ	Rental Values Percent Rented* (weight)	Home Values d/σ	Home Values Percent Owned* (weight)	Economic Score
	(3)		(6)		(7)
1	1.10	.763	.49	.237	.96
2	— .36	.840	— .75	.160	— .42
3	1.63	.941	1.66	.059	1.63
4	1.45	.901	2.47	.099	1.55
5	— .90	.679	—1.41	.321	—1.08
6	— .80	.763	— .97	.237	— .84
7	— .53	.620	— .58	.380	— .55
8	—1.25	.583	— .89	.417	—1.10
9	— .84	.708	— .85	.292	— .84
10	— .74	.707	— .45	.293	— .66
11	— .86	.489	— .70	.511	— .78
12	—1.29	.610	—1.36	.390	—1.32
13	— .50	.615	— .32	.385	— .43
14	—1.18	.411	— .38	.589	— .71
15	.88	.609	.89	.391	.88
16	.96	.633	.49	.367	.79
17	— .22	.430	— .25	.570	— .24
18	2.54	.539	2.24	.461	2.40
19	.56	.538	.85	.462	.70
20	.56	.431	.15	.569	.33
21	— .06	.540	— .51	.460	— .27
22	.78	.491	.70	.509	.74
23	— .13	.534	— .01	.466	— .07
24	— .89	.422	— .41	.578	— .61
25	.07	.454	— .07	.546	— .01

NOTE: The original d/σ calculations were carried to four decimal places.

*These percents equal 100 for each ward because they are based on the total number of cases for which Census data were secured, thus excluding the "tenure unknown" category which normally appears in Census tabulations.

TABLE XXXIII

MEAN RENTAL AND HOME VALUES, WITH RELATIVE RANKINGS (d/σ) BY DISTRICTS, BRIDGEPORT, 1930

District	Rental Values Mean	Rental Values Deviation from Mean of Ward Means	Rental Values d/σ	Home Values Mean	Home Values Deviation from Mean of Ward Means	Home Values d/σ
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1	$ 42.38	$ 11.26	1.73	$ 10,175.	$ 2,284.	1.68
2	24.95	—6.17	— .95	7,890.	— 1.	0
3	26.22	—4.90	— .75	7,910.	19.	.01
4	31.67	.55	.08	5,255.	—2,636.	—1.94
5	39.97	8.85	1.36	9,670.	1,779.	1.31
6	32.47	1.35	.21	8,165.	274.	.20
7	39.75	8.63	1.33	9,438.	1,547.	1.14
8	32.87	1.75	.27	6,532.	—1,359.	—1.00
9	29.37	—1.75	— .27	7,883.	— 8.	— .01
10	21.32	—9.80	—1.51	7,600.	— 291.	— .21
11	23.57	—7.55	—1.16	7,832.	— 59.	— .04
12	28.85	—2.27	— .35	6,343.	—1,548.	—1.14
	Mean = $ 31.12			Mean = $ 7,891		
	$\Sigma d^2/N$ = 42.346			$\Sigma d^2/N$ = 1,844,171		
	σ = 6.51			σ = 1,358		

TABLE XXXIV

ECONOMIC SCORE, BY DISTRICTS, BRIDGEPORT, 1930

Based on combination of d/σ values of Mean Rentals and Home Values for each District, *weighted* by their respective percentages of Rented and Owned Homes.

District	Rental Values d/σ	Rental Values Percent Rented* (weight)	Home Values d/σ	Home Values Percent Owned* (weight)	Economic Score
	(3)		(6)		(7)
1	1.73	.818	1.68	.182	1.72
2	— .95	.823	0	.177	— .78
3	— .75	.734	.01	.266	— .55
4	.08	.723	—1.94	.277	— .48
5	1.36	.586	1.31	.414	1.34
6	.21	.619	.20	.381	.21
7	1.33	.797	1.14	.203	1.29
8	.27	.582	—1.00	.418	— .26
9	— .27	.713	— .01	.287	— .19
10	—1.51	.831	— .21	.169	—1.29
11	—1.16	.839	— .04	.161	— .98
12	— .35	.695	—1.14	.305	— .59

NOTE: The original d/σ calculations were carried to four decimal places.

*These percents equal 100 for each ward because they are based on the total number of cases for which Census data were secured, thus excluding the "tenure unknown" category which normally appears in Census tabulations.

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